Gender Politics in the Novels of Eliza Haywood

Susan Muse
Marquette University

GENDER POLITICS IN THE NOVELS OF ELIZA HAYWOOD

by

Susan Vida Muse, B.A., M.A.

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ABSTRACT
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This study investigates how Eliza Haywood addressed ideological conflicts about gender produced by modernization in early eighteenth-century England. Expanding Michael McKeon's theory of the novel to include "questions of gender," I address a wide sample of novels in order to show how Haywood's writing developed during her long career. Her first preoccupation was the sexual double standard that defined "fallen women" as society's exiles. Influenced by the "she-tragedy" of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, Haywood wrote novels that elicited pity for fallen women and searched for reasons to explain their condition. Haywood's writing became overtly political with her first secret history, *Memoirs of a Certain Island, Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* (1725-6). Conceived as an imitation of an earlier political fiction, this novel figures the South Sea Bubble of 1720 as an organizing metaphor for the corruption of English government and society. Haywood uses amatory fiction as allegory to show that in public and in private life, worthy persons lost their places to ambitious social climbers as the nation's institutions were made to serve the greed of a minority of self-interested individuals. Haywood's appreciation of the connections between public life and the private subjugation of women is demonstrated in the novels she writes later that expose how men benefit and women are exploited by economic and legal structures that render women powerless. Although Haywood's later period of writing (1740-1756) has previously been characterized as a shift towards more conservative views, I argue that *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) is in fact Haywood's most politically radical work. She is the first English novelist to portray an abusive marriage and an attempted legal separation, and in her analysis of a husband's legal prerogatives, Haywood shows that women share common political interests because of their gender.

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Susan Vida Muse, B.A., M.A.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION
ELIZA HAYWOOD AND THE RISE OF THE NOVEL

Eliza Haywood (1693?-1756) was one of the most prolific English writers of the eighteenth century, perhaps second only to Daniel Defoe. She wrote in a variety of genres, including the periodical essay, the conduct book and drama. She was most famous, however, for her novels. Henry Fielding famously acknowledged her reputation when he cast her as "Mrs. Novel" in his play *The Author's Farce* (1730). Recent bibliographic research shows that she authored at least 44 texts between 1719 and 1753 that she and her readers called "novels."[1] Most were written in the 1720s; of these, most are novella length and almost all of them are primarily love stories.[2] Critics have called these books "romances" (Whicher), "amatory fiction" (Ballaster) and "amatory novellas" (Richetti, *Popular Fiction* 173). There has been some resistance to calling them "novels," partly because scholars long viewed Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) as the first novel, partly because the novel was closely associated with formal realism, and partly because the novel was accorded high culture status that, until the 1980's, was denied to many women writers. Furthermore, twentieth-century criticism has tended to divide the novel from romance, and because Haywood wrote love stories, her fiction is frequently identified as romance.

Michael McKeon changed our conception of the novel when he redefined it as a form that mediated cultural and ideological conflicts generated by the momentous social

[1] This number excludes some works of fiction that seem to lack the single story line of books we identify as novels. For instance, *The Tea-Table* (1725) is a representation of polite conversation between the sexes that includes stories told as exemplars, but I see this text more as a didactic work of manners than a novel, *per se*.

[2] Novels like *Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots* (1725), for instance, may include elements of Haywood's love stories, but they are not primarily about love.

and intellectual modernization of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. "The genre of the novel," he argues, "can be understood comprehensively as an early modern cultural instrument designed to confront, on the level of narrative form and content, both intellectual and social crisis simultaneously" (*Origins* 22). McKeon has expanded our understanding of the novel's purpose and function beyond entertainment or aesthetic pleasure; the novel both reflects and shapes cultural ideologies, and it is in this respect that Haywood's early novels need to be re-examined. Her novels have too often been categorized as simple entertainments that lack a serious purpose. For instance, John Richetti argues that her 1720s novels are "popular fiction" that served as "fantasy machines" (*Popular Fiction* 9), and William Warner labels her early novels "formula fiction" that were read by the masses for entertainment (*Licensing* 112). Few scholars have approached her early fiction as politically inflected or socially engaged, and most of those who have study only one or two texts.[3] This study aims both to understand Haywood's early texts as ideologically motivated in McKeon's sense and to show how Haywood's political commitments developed over the course of the 1720s and into the last decade of her career. In addition, since Haywood's later novels of the 1740s and 1750s are often considered separately, almost as if Haywood were two different authors, this study will examine how the concerns she developed in her amatory fiction survive

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[3] George Whicher's *The Life and Romances of Eliza Haywood* (1915) was the first twentieth-century monograph to consider Haywood's oeuvre in light of the history of the novel, but his treatment of her work is generally derogatory. Mary Anne Schofield's *Quiet Rebellion: The Fictional Heroines of Eliza Fowler Haywood* (1982) was the second, and she does treat Haywood seriously as a feminist; however, her analyses too often reduce Haywood's work to expressions of feminist "rage." Juliette Merritt's *Beyond Spectacle: Eliza Haywood's Female Spectators* (2004) examines only three of Haywood's novels. Margaret Rose's *Political Satire and Reforming Vision in Eliza Haywood's Works* (1996) addresses only Haywood's overtly political works. Kathryn King's *The Political Biography of Eliza Haywood* will be published in June 2012. There are, to date, no other published monographs on Haywood's many novels.

into her "mature" period. Thus, this study will provide a more extensive understanding of Haywood's career as a whole.

McKeon's research suggests that the novel is both a product of and producer of social change. This study will explicate how Haywood's early novels did their cultural work of confronting social change. Specifically, I will argue that Haywood's "amatory disaster narratives"[4] expose the fault lines in the bourgeois ideology that shaped female subjectivity in the eighteenth century. They are witnesses to a complex historical transformation: England's traditional, religious and largely agrarian society transformed into one that was individualistic, secular and commercial. Excluded from the new economy and dependent upon fathers and husbands for survival and status, women became powerless objects to be traded and profited from, or exploited and cast aside, and this problem dominates Haywood's work. In Haywood's hands, a love story is not just a love story: it becomes a critique of patriarchy, secularism, liberal individualism, and capitalism.

The "Rise" of the Novel

Although dating the first novel remains a vexed question,[5] most scholars would agree that the novel became a popular form in England in the eighteenth century. The primary force in the propagation of this new form of literature was the expansion of the reading public and the print market. At the beginning of the century, England was the center of an explosion of growth in literacy and publishing. In 1600, about twenty five percent of English men could read; by 1800, that figure grew to sixty or seventy percent

[4] The term is Ashley Tauchert's. I will discuss her work in more detail below.
[5] For instance, while Ian Watt and J. Paul Hunter both designate the early eighteenth-century as the novel's date of origin, Josephine Donovan finds the novel emerging in the Middles Ages, while Margaret Anne Doody claims the first novel was written in Ancient Greece.

(Hunter 66). In other words, literacy among males at the end of the eighteenth-century was some two or three times what it had been in the beginning of the seventeenth. The surge in literacy took place not among the upper classes, who were already literate, but among the middling classes (Hunter 66). Female literacy is more difficult to determine. Figures from the second half of the eighteenth century suggest that the rate for women's literacy was about two-thirds that of men (Hunter 72). Thus, even without exact figures, we can be certain that "female literacy, like male literacy, climbed substantially" between 1600 and 1750 (Hunter 72). However, the study of literacy rates in this period is usually based on the ability to sign one's name on a public document, which is a problematic method. Keith Thomas points out that writing is a different skill than reading, and men and women were not necessarily schooled to do both. He believes that the ability to read was much greater than the ability to write. "There is reason to believe," he concludes, that previous estimates "are not just an underestimate of those who could read, but a spectacular underestimate" ("Literacy" 103). Especially difficult to assess is the reading ability of women, who probably had less of a need for writing, yet were often entrusted with teaching their children to read ("Literacy" 103). Thus, we can suppose that the ability to read was, if anything, much more common than the scholarly literature suggests.

This rise in literacy was accompanied by a greater demand for reading material. Before 1695, the Licensing Act restricted the number of printers and presses and required prior governmental approval for all publications. When the Licensing Act lapsed in 1695, there was "an explosion of printed matter" (Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?* 178). Using library holdings as evidence, Julian Hoppit estimates that the number of titles published per year more than doubled between 1660 and 1760 (*A Land of Liberty?* 178). The period

following the Glorious Revolution and the Licensing Act, 1689-1727, saw an eighty-two percent increase in printed titles per year—from one thousand one hundred to two thousand. Hoppit concludes, "There is little question that the nature of England's reading public was dramatically transformed after 1695" (*A Land of Liberty?* 180-81). Although freedom from censorship certainly contributed to the expansion of the print market, Michael F. Suarez, S.J., argues that a number of other factors played important—and perhaps more important—roles. For instance, the lapse of the Licensing Act also eliminated government control over the number and location of printers. The eighteenth-century thus saw a significant increase in both the number of printing houses and their establishment outside of London. The expansion of transportation and the post office enlarged the potential market and made print more accessible to remote consumers. The financial revolution also provided economic instruments that advanced the trade. Thus, the explosion of print materials should be seen as much a consequence of economic development as of the reduction in government controls ("Introduction" 12-35).

Jürgen Habermas has argued that England's reading public in the eighteenth century was an essential component of the development of a bourgeois "public sphere." The public sphere enables citizens to come together to debate with each other and criticize their government and thus constitutes a critical step towards democracy. The debate depended on "people's public use of their reason" (27). In eighteenth-century England, these debates began in coffeehouses where men of different classes socialized (33). Debates were often initiated by print mediums like periodicals and newspapers, and, in turn, these printed forms continued and expanded the debates across London (42-43). The public sphere thus becomes a "virtual space" embodied in the "public post, print

culture, the periodical essay, and the like" (McKeon, "Parsing" 276). Even women, excluded from coffeehouses and politics, could participate in this public sphere through reading—and writing—printed texts.

Habermas's theory has come under scrutiny, and many scholars dispute his claim for a democratic public sphere of press and coffeehouse. The most obvious objection is this public sphere excluded all but the upper ranks of men, and thus hardly satisfies our ideas of democracy (Downie 3). In addition, the case of the *Spectator* and its insistence on civil discourse was perhaps exceptional, rather than normative, in a culture where partisan politics flourished (Griffin 189). It is probably more accurate to view the increase in partisan publications during the civil war and the Restoration as contributing to "the production of huge numbers of writings intended to influence what we would call public opinion" (Downie 15). These texts, mass produced and addressed to the public on matters of public concern, did make it possible for the common man—and even the common woman—to participate in debates that might have been relegated to exclusive drawing rooms or the houses of Parliament in earlier times.[6]

The new print market produced a variety of reading material, including religious and political tracts, didactic guides, criminal biographies, and travel narratives in addition to "novels." According to J. Paul Hunter, we should consider all the forms of printed matter as contributing to the development of the novel. He argues that the novel is an "imperialistic" genre that took over and appropriated formal elements from other texts (58). "The emerging novel must be placed in a broader context of cultural history . . .

[6] By "participate" I mean as little as reading and responding to a text—and that response might be made only in the mind of the reader. In other words, I do not insist on the public nature of this kind of participation. Rather, participation in the public sphere by text indicates the interaction between author and reader about a larger public world they both inhabit.

popular thought and materials of everyday print—journalism, didactic materials with all kinds of religious and ideological directions, and private papers and histories—need to be seen as contributors to the social and intellectual world in which the novel emerged," Hunter argues (5). Thus, the novel often served a variety of purposes, including providing news, information, education, or inspiration.

Perhaps because of its broad origin, "novel" has been defined in widely different ways. In the eighteenth century, "novel" was often synonymous with "romance." Medieval legends of knights errant were called "romances," as were the multivolume, heroic love stories penned in the seventeenth century by authors like Madame de Scudéry. When eighteenth-century writers did distinguish between novel and romance, they generally meant the latter. William Congreve, in his preface to his "novel" *Incognita* (1691), writes,

> Romances are generally composed of the Constant Loves and invincible Courages of Hero's, Heroins, Kings and Queens, Mortals of the first Rank, and so forth; where lofty Language, miraculous Contingencies and impossible Performances, elevate and surprise the Reader into giddy Delight . . . Novels are of a more familiar nature; Come near us, and represent to us Intrigues in practice, delight us with Accidents and odd Events, but not such as are wholly unusual or unpresidented, such which not being so distant from our Belief bring also pleasure nearer us. (27)

Even at this early date, Congreve describes the novel as more realistic and believable than romances, and his reference to "Intrigues in practice" shows that he associates the novel with love stories. The preface to the anonymously authored *The Secret History of Queen Zarah* (1705) identifies shorter length as one of the key features of the new genre: "The *Little Histories* of this Kind . . . which have banished *Romances* are much more agreeable to the Brisk and Impetuous Humour of the *English*, who have naturally no

Taste for long-winded Performances, for they have no sooner begun a Book but they desire to see the End of it" (33).

Both romance and novel were understood to be love stories. Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) defined "novel" as "a small tale, generally of love." The novel no doubt gained this characterization because the early novelists wrote love stories. Dieter Schulz has argued that the novels of Aphra Behn, Delarivier Manley and Eliza Haywood are hybrid forms combining elements of the courtly novella from medieval literature with those of the French heroic romance (84). These "novels," replete with sensational sexual intrigue, became the hated target of eighteenth-century moralists who blasted the immoral effects of novel reading (78). Ros Ballaster has argued instead that the novels of Behn, Manley and Haywood are patterned after French *nouvelles* written by authors like Madame de Lafayette and Madame de Villedieu (31-68).

Literary historians have tended to distinguish the romantic novels of the early eighteenth century from the longer novels published later. Ian Watt, in his seminal study, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (1957), posits that the later novel was a literary revolution in both form and content. In form, the novel marked a break with highly conventional prose literature like romance. Novels are ruled by formal realism: they portray particularity in character and setting and, instead of patterning plot after formal conventions, show cause and effect, rather than fate or coincidence, to be the generator of action. Watt maintains that the novel is a form that "purports to be an authentic account of actual experiences of individuals" (27). Furthermore, the aristocratic trials of love and honor that constitute the subject of romance are replaced by the mundane concerns of those actual individuals. The rising

middle class, who had the money to buy books and the leisure to read them, shaped the novel's content. Eighteenth-century novels feature middle-class characters and champion the individualism that was the middle class's greatest historical achievement. Watt recognizes Daniel Defoe as an early practitioner of formal realism, but reserves his greatest admiration for Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding, whose novels are the best examples we have of the early realistic novel.

Watt's study is still, deservedly, influential. However, he has been criticized for excluding women novelists from consideration. Apart from a nod to Jane Austen in his conclusion (296-299), Watt does not recognize any eighteenth-century woman as a novelist. Jane Spencer's *The Rise of the Woman Novelist* (1986) is an overt attempt to rewrite Watt's history. She writes:

> Eighteenth-century England witnessed two remarkable and interconnected literary events: the emergence of the novel and the establishment of the professional woman writer. The first of these has been extensively documented and debated, while the second has been largely ignored. Yet the rise of the novel cannot be understood fully without considering how its conventions were shaped by the contributions of a large number of women, their writing deeply marked by the 'femininity' insistently demanded of them by the culture to which they belonged. (viii)

Spencer argues that women's writing began, early in the century, with amatory fiction that made both the novel and the novelist morally suspect. Women writers were presumed to be just as amorous as their characters, and, while they did publish, they had to sacrifice their reputations (22-33). By mid-century, these same writers were reviled for immorality, and, in order to preserve their reputations and become successful, women writers became more chaste, domestic and moral both in their fictions and in the way they presented themselves (75-81). Spencer believes there were three paths open to the female novelist: she could write novels of protest, didactic novels, or novels of escape (107-212).

The reason the number of women writers grew throughout the eighteenth century is that a view of writing developed that "links it to the feminine role rather than opposing the two" (xi). That is, as new ideas of femininity increasingly limited women to the home and the domain of feeling, women writers could claim respectability and authority in writing about the domestic sphere.

Recently, Franco Moretti has offered a more dynamic theory of the novel and of women writers. His quantitative study of novels and authors reveals several "shifts" in the production of English novels. He notes three periods in the history of the eighteenth-century novel: 1720-1730, when women writers dominated the market, 1740-1780, when male authorship became prevalent, and 1780-1820, when female authorship dominates. Moretti explains these as literary cycles where "gender and genre are probably in sync with each other—a generation of military novels, nautical tales, and historical novels *à la* Scott attracting male writers, one of domestic, provincial and sensation novels attracting women writers, and so on" (89). But these shifts indicate not only that writers of different genders wrote different kinds of novels, but also that the reading public desired differently gendered novels in different periods. What Moretti describes are historical cycles in which male and female writers, producing different kinds of novels, battle each other for control of the market, and, by extension, their culture's imaginative life. He suggests that the battle is won when the old form loses its relevance. The previous form is replaced when "a genre exhausts its potentialities—and the time comes to give a competitor a chance—when its inner form can no longer represent the most significant aspects of contemporary reality" (77 n8). Thus, Moretti argues that the novel is not a single genre, but a "system of genres" where one kind of novel replaces another in

historical cycles that represent cultural paradigm shifts (90). Moretti's thesis is extremely helpful in advancing the study of the novel genre because it frees us to consider how earlier forms of prose fiction, traditionally considered separately from the novel, contributed to the development of the genre. Not only does Moretti's thesis resolve the tension between romance and novel that has stymied modern critics, his research also prompts us to ask, what cultural work did the early amatory novel do that was exhausted by 1740, when a new form of novel appeared?

Ashley Tauchert asks a related question that is especially important for women writers. Scholars have tended to see eighteenth-century women writers as primarily economically motivated: as they frequently claim in their prefaces, they "write for bread." Or, scholars assume that the greater literacy and liberty of eighteenth century England removed the barriers that had prevented them from writing earlier. Tauchert asks us to examine the validity of this assumption. Did women begin to write in unprecedented numbers in the eighteenth century because barriers were finally removed? Or, was there something about this period that "provoked" women to write (49-53)? In Moretti's terms, why is one period dominated by women writers and another by men? It is an important question about the agency of women writers, and it is especially pertinent to Eliza Haywood, who has been characterized as writing from economic desperation, adapting to public tastes in order to retain her market share. Dale Spender challenges this assumption:

> To suggest . . . that Eliza Haywood prostituted her talents merely to give the fickle reading public what it wanted to read, is not only to do a disservice to her talent but to portray her in a purely passive role. She was part of the society she was writing about and writing for, and she helped to shape as well as to reflect the social values of her period. It is absurd to think solely in terms of her reaction to

> public demand, and to omit any consideration of the role she played in stimulating, extending and developing the tastes of her audience. (90)

Similarly, Paula Backscheider asks, "Why are we content with seeing Haywood's texts as derivative and reactive rather than studying her agency in the history of the developing English novel?" ("Story" 20). I hope this study is a critical step towards understanding Haywood as an original writer whose relentless publishing shaped and changed early prose fiction into the modern novel as we know it today.

What provoked Haywood to write? How are her novels an answer to the public's needs in the 1720s, when women novelists dominated the market, and how did she respond to the changes in the genre in the 1740s and 1750s, when male authors became more popular? I will argue that Haywood wrote to change public opinion about women and their status. Her serious critiques of women's powerlessness overcome the idealism of romance and prepare readers for novels that provoke serious and critical reflection. In a sense, her novels were a kind of public use of reason that criticized society and prompted readers to do the same. As the culture assimilated a vision of womanhood consistent with newly dominant ideologies, her early novels exhausted their form. The persistence of amatory themes in the novels of the 1740s and later shows, however, that the "woman question" was not neatly solved. And Haywood's use of domestic realism opened the door for scrutiny of the new domestic ideal.

The Novel and Ideological Change

Famously, Michael McKeon has supplemented Watt's thesis in his book *The Origins of the English Novel*, 1600-1740 (1987). Focusing on origins, McKeon rejects Watt's surgical separation of romance and novel, aristocrat and middle class. He notes that even the novels Watt cites as exemplary include romance elements and enclose

arguments about aristocratic honor and bourgeois merit. Enlarging on Watt's thesis that the novel rose to prominence because it was the ultimate expression of the life experience of the rising middle class, McKeon argues that the novel emerged at this time because of "its unrivaled power both to formulate, and to explain, a set of problems that are central to early modern experience" (*Origins* 20). McKeon defines two social and philosophical "crises" that the novel addresses: first, "questions of truth," which wrestle with new scientific empiricism and extreme skepticism, and, second, "questions of virtue" which attack both the aristocratic ideology of social privilege and a progressive ideology of social equality. This second issue is most pertinent for the study of Eliza Haywood's novels, so I will pause here to explain McKeon's thesis in full.

According to McKeon, the unprecedented social mobility of seventeenth-century England produced a cultural confusion between economic class and social status that became embodied in narrative. The privileges of the nobility were supported by an "aristocratic ideology" that, in sum, argues birth equals worth. The superior status of aristocrats, in other words, is a reflection and result of the superior virtue acquired through noble birth. Rising economic classes, however, challenged aristocratic power and its justification. McKeon labels this competing worldview "progressive ideology." He writes, "For progressive ideology, elevated birth is an arbitrary accident which should not be taken to signify worth. . . *Real* honor, honor of *character*, attaches to personal virtue" ("Generic Transformation" 173). As aristocrats had done before them, the upwardly mobile claimed their worldly power was a result of their inner virtue. McKeon elaborates: "For progressives . . . Virtue is signified not by the a priori condition of having been born with status and honor, but by the ongoing experience of demonstrated achievement and

just reward. Thus the status inconsistency endemic to aristocratic culture is rectified, in this progressive view, by upward mobility through state service, private employment, or any other method of industrious self-application" ("Generic Transformation" 173). This progressive view, however, was in turn challenged by a third, "conservative ideology." Conservatives were skeptical that the newly rich and powerful had any better claim to virtue than the aristocracy. "From the conservative point of view," McKeon clarifies, "progressive ideology only replaced the old social injustice by a new and more brutal version of it, unsoftened now by any useful fictions of inherited authority" ("Generic Transformation" 174).

The Origins of the English Novel usefully locates the emergence of the novel within a nexus of historical and ideological change in seventeenth and eighteenth-century England. In his analysis, McKeon privileges economic change and the upward mobility of the middle class. However, as he himself notes in 1995, this economic change initiated another transformative shift in society. Alongside capitalism, modern patriarchy emerges ("Historicizing" 295). The first indication of change was the exclusion of women from the economy. Changing economic conditions such as enclosure and the trend towards larger estates eliminated traditional female employment like dairy farming and put women in competition with men for jobs. One consequence of the loss of women's employment was that women needed to marry younger for economic support. In upwardly mobile middle-class families, idleness in women became a symbol of a family's gentility, further exacerbating women's economic dependence on men ("Historicizing" 299).

This economic change produced the separation of a feminine, private sphere from the masculine, public sphere so commonly observed in the eighteenth century. This economic change also promoted the notion of sexual difference. Whereas earlier conceptions of sexual difference viewed women and men as a single animal, with the proviso that women were weaker versions of men, new theories posited that men and women had fundamentally different bodies and natures. As McKeon explains, "In the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, England acquired the modern wisdom that there are not one but two sexes; that they are biologically distinct and therefore incommensurable; and that they are defined not by behavior, which is variable, but by nature, which is not" ("Historicizing" 301). Ironically, just as society was moving towards a view of (male) personal worth as variable, not defined by blood but by social behavior, it was also moving toward a view of gender that defined sex as biologically determinate. In other words, as men experienced a widening of personal possibilities within society, women experienced a lessening of the same. The most important area of overlap between the two systems of difference—the difference between the sexes and the difference between the classes—is the material. Economics and the body become reflections of each other. In McKeon's words, "For the primary focus of the sexual system is of course on the material as the biological, and the primary focus of the class system is on the material as economic; whereas the overlap takes place on the ground of the social, where the unalterability of biological difference, mollified by the solvent of gender analysis, meets the alterability of the socioeconomic situation" ("Historicizing" 307).

The patriarchal shift was in turn reflected in political philosophy, and because the language of these debates appears frequently in Haywood's work, it is worthwhile to review them here. Liberal political theory accommodated capitalism and the system of patriarchy that supported it. John Locke authorized economic individualism and the sovereignty of private property in *Two Treatises of Government* (1690). According to Locke, male citizens had natural rights to liberty and property: "The *Natural Liberty* of Man is to be free from any Superior Power on Earth, and not to be under the Will or Legislative Authority of Man, but to have only the Law of Nature for his rule" (283). The natural rights men claimed as their own were simultaneously denied to women. Although Locke avoids extensive commentary on women, he does reveal his patriarchal beliefs. When a man and wife disagree, for instance, the man has the final word: "it naturally falls to the Man's share, as the abler and the stronger" (321). Thus, the revolution in citizen's rights for males embodied in the Bill of Rights of 1689 did not afford women greater liberty. "The period following the Glorious Revolution was a time for reasserting male authority and for reinventing all the reasons for women's subservience to men," Ruth Perry has noted:

> Although [the Glorious Revolution] established men's right to resist tyranny and to insist on a Protestant succession, in theory as well as practice it tightened the reins on women and reaffirmed men's power over them. John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government*, which provided the theoretical justification for the revolutionary settlement, in separating the rights of citizens from the obligations of families, announced a paradigm shift from a political world populated by men and women involved in a web of familial and sexual interconnectedness to an all-male world based solely on contractual obligation. (450)

Locke's justification for male dominance of women would become the liberal ideological explanation for the subservience of women. But before it became entrenched, the notion was attacked by Tory polemicist Mary Astell, sometimes called England's first feminist.

In the preface to the 1706 edition of her tract *Reflections on Marriage* (1700), Astell protested the subservient position imposed on women. She identified the contradiction at the center of Locke's theory of the liberty: "If Absolute Sovereignty be not necessary in the State, how comes it to be so in a Family?" Astell demands. "If all Men are born free, how is it that all Women are born slaves?" (76). She also understood that Locke's separation of the family from the world of politics heralded further subservience for women. "She was deeply suspicious of the separation of public from private politics," Ruth Perry notes. "When Locke separated these two spheres, treated them as if different rules applied in them, the effect on women of this move, she was quick to point out, was to exclude them from the public and tyrannize over them in private. The contract among male citizens seemed to entail a silent clause about the subjugation of women" (455). Eliza Haywood shared many of Astell's ideas. She frequently uses Astell's language; words like "liberty," "tyranny," and "slave" are used to describe the relationships between men and women. Haywood is also suspicious of contracts as substitutes for more traditional forms of social responsibility. And Haywood insisted, as Astell had, that female education must be reformed.

Mary Astell's protest failed. Her ideas were erased by a gender ideology compatible with capitalist patriarchy that has been called the "cult of femininity" or the "cult of womanhood." As Marlene LeGates explains, the fear of the disorderly lusts of women characteristic of earlier ages was replaced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the ideal of educating women to become chaste and obedient wives (22-23). The rise of the modern nuclear family in the eighteenth-century, which separated women into a private, domestic sphere, promoted the values of "familial affection, marital

fidelity and female chastity" (24). Historian Lawrence Stone observes that the eighteenth-century was the origin of the modern expectation for a "companionate marriage" where spouses could enjoy "emotional satisfaction" (*The Family, Sex and Marriage* 325). This expectation led to a relaxation of marriage arrangements so that young people had more voice in the choice of partners. It also led to an idealization of the home and especially the wife. By the end of the eighteenth century the model landed or upper middle-class wife was "a well-informed and motivated woman with educational training and the internalized desire to devote her life to pleasing her husband and providing him friendship and intelligent companionship, partly to the efficient supervision of servants and domestic arrangements; and partly to educating her children in ways appropriate to the future" (*The Family, Sex and Marriage* 358). The moral domestic woman also, according to LeGates, became a symbol of social status, separating the upper classes from the lower classes. "The new image of Womanhood was an attempt on the part of the upper classes to consolidate their precariously won prosperity and security against the 'outs' of society" she notes (38).

In addition to these socio-economic shifts, the shift to secularism that began in the late seventeenth century remained a source of social conflict. Roy Porter sums up the major changes: René Descartes insisted that reason established truth and the universe was ruled by cause and effect; Thomas Hobbes denied the immaterial and portrayed man as a machine driven by self-interest; John Locke insisted that revelation could not contradict reason (*Creation* 55-56; 58; 62). The new faith in reason and science drove out more traditional religious explanations for human nature and history:

> Many domains underwent what, from a twentieth-century viewpoint has been called the "taming of chance', though it might less anachronistically be deemed

> the denial or distancing of the transcendental. That was exemplified in the rise of social scientific frames of thinking—the belief that social happenings should be explicable in terms of impersonal, universal law, expressed within categories of such emergent disciplines as political economy, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and demography. All this went with myriad slight, but cumulatively significant, day-to-day indications that polite and propertied society, afflicted by adversity or the unknown, was growing less disposed to look to the Hand of God, and certainly not to the wiles of Satan. (Porter, *Creation* 208)

Among the elite, metaphysics and magic were rejected (Porter, *Creation* 53).

However, older religious traditions and superstitions continued to play a role in eighteenth century life. Queen Anne still believed she could cure scrofula through the "royal touch" (Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?* 41). In 1714, Jane Wenham was the last English woman to be condemned as a witch, although a Leicestershire woman was "swum" as late as 1736 (Porter, *Creation* 222). Eliza Haywood and William Bond popularized the notion of fortune telling in their publications on Duncan Campbell, and Daniel Defoe considered the reality of ghosts in his *Essay on the History and Reality of Apparitions* (1727). The latency of traditional religious belief can be seen in the early novel's frequent recourse to providence or poetic justice. Indeed, Richetti believes the prevailing conflict in early popular fiction is a secular/religious one. The early novel's insistence on providence "points to one source of the ideological tensions of the day: the defence of the traditional religious view of man against the new secularism of the Enlightenment" (*Popular Fiction* 17). The novels of the 1720s all exhibit evidence of this tension. While Penelope Aubin and Daniel Defoe confidently assert the power of providence in human affairs, Eliza Haywood is both a believer and a skeptic: she sometimes claims that providence rules her characters' lives, but she also attributes events to chance. Insofar as there is a religious dimension to her writing, it seems to

consist in her view of human nature as essentially fallen: men and women are susceptible to passion and unable to control their urges. Her views clash with bourgeois ideas about the perfectibility of man and the possibility of rational self-control.

This summary of ideological changes in the eighteenth-century captures the historical contexts that Haywood responded to in her writing. Her novels most consistently show what McKeon calls the "conservative" critique of "progressive" ideologies. The great majority of her novels concern characters whose old-fashioned ideas of honor are threatened by city traders, businessmen, and fortune hunters who obey no law but self-interest. Haywood looked critically on marriage settlements that allowed men to rise in society through marriage. She saw that male ambition would reduce women to objects to be traded or profited from. As a novelist, she exposes the fault lines of a bourgeois ideology that pretended to protect women from the hardships it in fact created for them. She shows that the promise of male protection promoted in popular culture and conduct books was an illusion, and that women had to be ready to defend their own legal and economic interests. She argued for education and knowledge instead of virtuous ignorance. In all of her work, she urges her female readers to see the disadvantages they must overcome. In the course of her career, Haywood produced a critique of society and gender relations that challenged normative assumptions, becoming a subversive, even a revolutionary, voice. Her intervention constitutes one of the boldest attempts at social critique made by any eighteenth-century novelist.

The Professional Woman Writer

The new world of the print market was somewhat remarkable in that it did not exclude women. Paula McDowell has documented the presence of women in all aspects

of the trade from 1678-1730, as printers, publishers, booksellers, "mercury women," hawkers and ballad singers. Although women usually gained control of a printing business only as widows or daughters, as wives they worked alongside their husbands in household shops as partners (33-62). Women printers did not necessarily shun controversy; sometimes women printers used their power to produce controversial religious and political material and insisted on their right to publish it (63-216). Women began as professional writers in the seventeenth century, usually producing religious tracts or almanacs (123).

After the Restoration, the theater, a potentially lucrative venue, attracted women writers like Aphra Behn and Delarivier Manley. They did also write novels, but the rate of women's novel production increases dramatically in the eighteenth-century. Cheryl Turner has tabulated the number of novels written by women and charts two periods of growth. The first is the 1720s, when Haywood produced, according to her count, thirty-five novels or seventy percent of the total output for female writers. This period is followed by a slump until the 1740s, when a slow increase in novels written by women begins again. After 1780, the number of novels dramatically increases. The peak year of the first wave, 1725, saw ten novels published (all by Haywood); by 1800, that number increased to thirty-five (Turner 35).[7] The two common features women writers shared was the need for income and a middle-class background (Turner 65).

Eliza Haywood was literally in the middle of it all. She is the only woman writer from the 1720s to survive the 1730s slump and publish later in the century. The other

[7] It should be noted that most of Haywood's early novels are short, but novels gained heft as the century proceeded. These figures may therefore distort our understanding of writers' production by focusing on separate titles rather than the number of pages.

women writers of the 1720s did not.[8] Her career testifies to her remarkable versatility and business sense. She often rode the wave of different trends but was able to adapt to changing tastes. She supported herself by diversifying into different market niches: she produced successful French translations, conduct guides, plays, and periodicals. So many titles have been attributed to her, that, before Patrick Spedding's superb 2004 bibliography, scholars had no certain list of Haywood's publications. Spedding found, in addition to the 72 different titles he could positively attribute to Haywood, 45 additional titles that had at one time been attributed to her.[9] Future research may actually reveal *more* of her work.[10] Since his bibliography remains the only modern scholarly appraisal of Haywood's canon, it is important to summarize Spedding's work here and provide some minimal information about each item in order to familiarize readers with the scope of Haywood's literary production. The summary that follows shows that Haywood's earliest books were destined for wealthy readers, but that her work became less expensive and more popular as her career proceeded. In addition, her early works proudly bear her name, but her later works do not, confirming Spencer's assertion that as the culture

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[8] Much is made of the stark difference between the sentimental novel of the later 1700s and the earlier examples of fiction. But Turner's study suggests that one reason for this dramatic difference may be simply that different women were doing the writing.

[9] Very recently, Leah Orr has challenged 29 of Spedding's attributions, arguing that some rest on shaky evidence made in attribution chains or advertisements. (She is unable, though, to positively eliminate any of them.) Although a full critique of her claims is not necessary here, I believe we must approach them with caution. First, she sometimes does not address all of the evidence Spedding presents, especially in the cases of *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia*, *The Female Spectator* and *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*—three works long attributed to Haywood, even in the eighteenth century. Second, Orr's apparent assumptions about the author appear to bias her interpretations of the evidence. For instance, she suggests that the obvious differences between Haywood's early work and her later work may be evidence that Haywood was not the author of both (359). She claims that there is no reason for Haywood to conceal her identity in the case of her later works which are quite proper (360), ignoring the trend toward anonymity among numerous female authors at mid-century. Orr also seems to overlook the arguments of scholars who find significant consistency between Haywood's early and later work. She is certainly right, though, that attribution of anonymous texts can be a tricky business and definitive evidence will always be welcomed by scholars.

[10] Kathryn King has recently suggested that the anonymously published *Nunnery Tales* (1727) may be Haywood's ("The Afterlife" 207).

became more reactionary, the woman writer had to cultivate a modest, nonpublic persona. Identifying some novels as "secret history" suggests that the public wanted novels that were seen to be current and real: the tag denotes real stories about actual individuals, a claim made by many texts at the time.

Love in Excess, Haywood's first publication, appeared in three volumes from January 1719 to February 1720. The first volume is anonymous, but the last two appear "by Mrs. Eliza Haywood," while Volume Two appeared with two dedicatory poems. *Love in Excess* is a romance set in France and the story of a noble rake reformed: the Duke D'Elmont seduces reputable maids carelessly and marries for fortune before he discovers true love with his ward. When D'Elmont accidentally kills his wife, his ward retreats to a convent until D'Elmont becomes a one-woman man and finally convinces her to marry. In 1957 William H. McBurney asserted that *Love in Excess*, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* were the three most popular novels before 1740 ("Mrs. Penelope Aubin" 250). While his claim may be true, scholars since have mistakenly asserted that *Love in Excess* was as popular as *Crusoe* and *Gulliver*, which is an exaggeration. As Patrick Spedding points out, while there are 193 entries in the *English Short Title Catalogue* for *Crusoe* and 65 for *Gulliver*, there are only 7 for *Love in Excess*. Spedding estimates that some 6,000 copies were printed in 23 years, an impressive number, but nothing to rival Defoe and Swift (*Bibliography* 88). Although claims for the popularity of this book have been overstated, its success should not be discounted. It launched Haywood's career as a writer for a well-heeled bourgeois public. After *Love in Excess*, Haywood solicited subscribers for a French translation that became *Letters From a Lady of Quality to a Chevalier* (1721). The 309 subscribers included Aaron Hill. This

book also contained an advertisement for Haywood's next venture, a book entitled, *The Danger of Giving Way to Passion, in Five Exemplary Novels. Written by Mrs. Haywood*. The collected volume was never published, but each of the five tales was published separately, called "a novel" and claimed "by Mrs. Eliza Haywood." *The British Recluse* appeared in April 1722; *The Injur'd Husband*, December 1722; *Idalia*, in three parts, April 1723 and June, 1723; *Lasselia*, October 1723; and *The Rash Resolve*, December 1723. These novels are short tales of women who succumb to illicit passion and suffer the consequences. These volumes also seem intended for an upscale reader. Like her first two books, George Frisbee Whicher notes, "no one of scanty means could have afforded Mrs. Haywood's slender octavos at the price of one to three shillings" (13).

In January 1724, the bookseller Dan Browne brought out *The Works of Mrs. Eliza Haywood* in four volumes that included all the works above, her two plays, *The Fair Captive* (1721) and *A Wife to be Lett* (1723), as well as a slender selection of poems called *Poems on Several Occasion*s. Spedding estimates the cost for this set was £1, a considerable sum at the time (*Bibliography* 65).

Although this collection crowned her efforts as a novelist for fashionable readers, Haywood's opportunities were expanding and she ventured beyond the usual sphere of lady novelist and poetess. Apparently commissioned by the deaf-mute fortune-teller Duncan Campbell, Haywood produced an eyewitness account of his powers in the anonymous *A Spy Upon the Conjurer* (March 1724). This book was sold by Campbell to drum up business. The narrator is a friend of Campbell's who observes his clientele and then tells a series of vignettes about the love-intrigues his clients reveal. This experiment in contemporary social gossip may have steered Haywood towards fact- or rumor-based

narratives like the secret histories she would produce later. In 1724, from April to August, Haywood wrote four additional novels of intrigue. The first, *The Masqueraders*, and the last, *The Arragonian Queen*, were each labeled "Secret History" and published anonymously. The two other novels, *The Surprise* and *The Fatal Secret*, were advertised as "by the author of *The Masqueraders*." These novels were also moralistic tales of a woman's seduction and ruin.

Haywood was busy in 1724, and managed to produce additional works. In August, she translated the first volume of *La Belle Assemblée* by Madame de Gomez. This translation of a French frame tale in which several fashionable couples trade tales during a visit to a country house would become one of Haywood's most popular and profitable works, although her name never appeared on it. The book was clearly aimed at genteel readers. The full title reads: *La Belle Assemblée: or, The Adventures of the Six Days. Being a Curious Collection of Remarkable Incidents that happened to some of the First Quality in France. Written in French for the Entertainment of the King and Dedicated to Him*. Dan Browne would eventually bring out volume one in three parts, and, by 1743, a handsome, four-volume set for 10s 6d.

Haywood followed this polite entertainment with an anonymous scandal chronicle, *Memoirs of a Certain Island, Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia*, which appeared in two parts in 1724 and 1725. The title recalls Delarivière Manley's *The New Atalantis*, since in that book Atalantis is the mythological kingdom adjacent to Utopia. Like Manley, Haywood used the scandal chronicle to ridicule and embarrass public figures by depicting them as sexual and moral transgressors. A second part was published in October 1725. The book did not enjoy the popularity of Manley's, however, and was out of print by

1726. Haywood followed this with another scandalous work, much shorter, called *Bath-Intrigues in Four Letters to a Friend in London*, also published in 1724. Like *Memoirs*, this work claimed to be a *roman à clef* in which the sexual liaisons of Bath society were exposed.

Finally, in December 1724, part I of *Memoirs of the Baron de Brosse* appeared, "by Authentick Authors." The title promised the story of the Baron's execution, "several particulars relating to the Wars in those Times" and, of course, "his Amours." This book is Haywood's first attempt at historical fiction.

In January 1725 Haywood translated, anonymously, *The Lady's Philosopher's Stone*, "an Historical Novel." She then brought out a two-part romance under her name, *The Unequal Conflict* (March) and *The Fatal Fondness* (May), each labeled "a novel." The first part is a novel of illicit passion; the second survives only in one copy in the Hans Sloane Museum in London and has not been seen by this writer. In May she also published part one of *The Tea Table*, "by Mrs. Eliza Haywood." Haywood's narrative of gentlemen and ladies at polite conversation is one of her earliest attempts at the kind of polite conduct guides she would write later and congruent with her first incarnation as a writer for the wealthier classes. This one "represented the Various Foibles and Affectations, which form the Character of the Accomplish'd Beau, or Modern Fine Lady. Interspersed with several Entertaining and Instructive Stories." May also saw the publication of Haywood's next anonymous book on Campbell, *The Dumb Projector*. In July Haywood produced another historical fiction, *Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots*, which called itself a "secret history translated from French by Mrs. Eliza Haywood."

In August, Browne compiled a set called *Secret Histories, Novels and Poems* by Mrs. Eliza Haywood. These four volumes included *Love In Excess*; the five exemplary novels and *Poems on Several Occasions* from *The Works*; three novels that had not appeared under her name before, *The Masqueraders*, *The Surprise* and *The Fatal Secret*; and two new romantic novels, *Fantomina* and *The Force of Nature*. These two new titles were also shorter novels of intrigue; *Fantomina* is the story of a woman who, in order to prevent her lover from tiring of her, dons disguises to appear repeatedly as a new lover. This title has become one of Haywood's most noted in recent years and is now anthologized for undergraduates in the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, ninth edition.

Haywood began 1726 with *The Mercenary Lover; or, The Unfortunate Heiress. Being a True Secret History of a City Amour, In a certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia. Written by the Author of the Memoirs* of the said Island (February). She wrote, anonymously, three more novels set in London: *The Distress'd Orphan; or, Love in a Madhouse* (May), *The City Jilt; or The Alderman Turned Beau: A Secret History* (June), and *The Double Marriage; or, The Fatal Release. A True Secret History* (August). These novels show Haywood's experimentation with plot and realistic detail. She also publishes three anonymous scandal chronicles. *The Secret History of the Present Intrigues of the Court of Caramania* (September) is a novel whose characters represent figures at George II's court. *Reflections on the Various Effects of Love* (April), promised "The latest amours and intrigues of persons of the first rank, of both sexes, or a certain Island adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia." This one was authored "*by the Author of The Mercenary Lover, and the Memoirs* of the said Island." Part Two, published in February

1727, advertised a "key to the whole." However, no copies of Part Two have survived. *Letters From the Palace of Fame* (September) is an oriental tale about Robert Walpole, "written by a first minister in the Regions of the Air." The year ends with the publication of *Cleomelia: or, The Generous Mistress* (December), which claims to be "The Secret History of a Lady Lately arriv'd from Bengall," but also admits to being written "by Mrs. Eliza Haywood." *Cleomelia* is a longer tale of sexual intrigue, which includes multiple deceptions and a protagonist who travels to the South Seas.

In 1727, Haywood produced five books. The first, *The Fruitless Enquiry* (February), was written "by Mrs. E. Haywood, Author of Love in Excess." This collection of amatory stories resembles other upmarket Haywood productions. *The Life of Madam de Villesache* (April) claimed to be "Written by a Lady, who was an Eye-witness of the greatest part of her Adventures and faithfully Translated from her French Manuscript By Mrs. Eliza Haywood." Although Whicher denied the claim of a French source, critics since tend to view *The Life of Madam de Villesache* as "a genuine, if unreliable, attempt at biography along the lines of *Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots*" (Spedding "Bibliography" 286). *Love in Its Variety* followed in June, "made into English by Mrs. Eliza Haywood." This collection of stories is derived from the Italian Matteo Bandello, although Haywood probably used a French translation (Whicher 31). In July the first part of *Philadore and Placentia*, "By Mrs. Haywood" appeared, and by the end of the year the second part was published. Finally, *The Perplex'd Duchess* appeared in October as authentic "memoirs."

Haywood also produced five books in 1728. Haywood's first novel of the year was *The Agreeable Caledonian* (June), which claimed to be the memoirs of one "Signiora

di Morella, a Roman Lady." Part Two appeared in January 1729. In August *The History of Clarina, a Novel*, by Mrs. Eliza Haywood appeared in Edmund Curll's collection, *The Female Dunciad*. Haywood followed this with an unsigned French translation, *The Disguis'd Prince*, a "True History." Part I came out in August 1728 and part II in May 1729. *The City Widow, a novel*, appeared in October; Haywood signed the dedication. Finally, the novel *Persecuted Virtue*, advertised as a "true secret history," was published in 1728 without Haywood's name.

By this time the years of manic production were over. For the rest of her career, Haywood produced only one or two books a year at most. In 1729 she brought out *The Fair Hebrew* under the aegis of a "true secret history." In March, she published her play, *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh*, which had a three night run and, contrary to the assertions of some critics, was a financial success (Spedding, *Bibliography* 309). Haywood's next volume does not appear until January 1730. *Love Letters on All Occasions, Lately Passed between Persons of Distinction* and "collected by Mrs. Eliza Haywood" shows Haywood's interest in epistolary fiction, even if this book was not a financial success.

Several theories have been advanced to explain Haywood's reduced output in the 1730's, including the idea that Pope's attack in the *Dunciad* had somehow intimidated her. It seems, instead, very possible that she had simply become more interested in the theater. As Robert Hume has shown, the relative freedom the London theaters enjoyed in the 1730's made writing plays more profitable than it had been earlier (*Henry Fielding*). Several plays have been attributed to Haywood during this time, but only two are confirmed as hers. In 1733, she adapted, with William Hatchett, Henry Fielding's *The*

Tragedy of Tragedies (1731) into a comic opera titled, *The Opera of Operas* (May). The first production was successful and ran from May 31 to June 25, 1733 at the Little Haymarket. The only other play known to be Haywood's is *Arden of Feversham*, performed at the Haymarket in January 1736, but never printed. Haywood's involvement in the theater in the 1730's may be what induced her to produce a companion to the theater, *The Dramatic Historiographer*, in March 1735. And William Hatchett's foray into Chinese tales may have inspired her to write *The Adventures of Eovaii*, an oriental allegory about Walpole in July 1736. This book has been mistakenly credited with bringing down Walpole's administration in 1742. Although the book was later reissued, it was probably in order to get rid of leftover copies. *The Adventures of Eovaii* was one of Haywood's least popular books (Spedding, *Bibliography* 348, 776).

When the Licensing Act closed the theaters in 1737, Haywood returned to novel writing as her main employment. Her first new novel was *Anti-Pamela* in 1741. She followed this satire with several French translations. In March 1742 she produced *The Virtuous Villager*, a translation of the French *La Paysanne Parvenue*, and in April she published a translation of Crébillion Fils's notorious erotic novel, *The Sopha* (Spedding "Shameless"). She may also have been commissioned in 1742 to take up the cause of the plaintiff in the famous Annesley trial. In any case, her fictional account, Part I of *The Memoirs of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman*, a "story founded in truth," was published in February. The second part, which included a "summary view of the tryal" appeared in 1743.[11] In June, Haywood brought out *A Present for A Servant Maid*, which was later

[11] Spedding was the first to discover Haywood's role in *The Sopha* and *The Memoirs of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman*. He reports his discovery of the *Memoirs* in his *Bibliography*, 382-391.

retitled *A New Present for A Servant-Maid.* This advice book was one of Haywood's most popular titles (Spedding, *Bibliography* 402).

In January 1744 she published anonymously another original novel, *The Fortunate Foundlings*, which claimed to tell the "genuine history of Colonel M—rs, and his Sister, Madam du P—y, the Issue of the Hon. Ch—es M—rs, Son of the Late Duke of R-l-d." This novel seems to imitate the orphan stories of French fiction then in vogue. She also began, in April, the monthly periodical *The Female Spectator*, which ran for two years, until May 1746. Haywood launched another periodical, *The Parrot*, in August, which ran weekly until October. Her anonymous translation, *Memoirs of a Man of Honour*, was published in April 1747. In April 1748 she published an original novel, *Life's Progress Through the Passions; or, The Adventures of Natura* "by the Author of *The Fortunate Foundlings*." *Natura* is a philosophical novel about human nature, quite unique among Haywood's creations. She also began another periodical, *Epistles for Ladies*, issued in six books from November 1748 to May 1749.

In July 1749 Haywood published anonymously *Dalinda*, "the Genuine History of a very Recent, very interesting Adventure." This novel told the titillating story of a case of bigamy that was much in the news. In November, Haywood published a pamphlet that some found sympathetic to the Pretender, *A Letter From H--- G---g, Esq, One of the Gentlemen of the Bed-chamber to the Young Chevalier, and the only Person of his own Retinue that attended him from Avignon, in his late Journey through Germany and elsewhere: Containing many remarkable and affecting occurrences, which happened to the P--, during the Course of his mysterious Progress*. This is the publication that caused Haywood's arrest for seditious libel.

At the end of her career, Haywood produced what many consider to be her two best novels. *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* was published in four volumes in October 1751. *The History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy* was published in three volumes in December 1752. Neither book carried Haywood's name. Her last major work, *The Invisible Spy*, is hard to classify in any one genre. The magically invisible narrator who travels London streets and reports on what he sees clearly recalls periodicals like Addison and Steele's *The Spectator*. However, *The Invisible Spy* is published as a novel, in four volumes, and its exposure of sexual intrigue makes it resemble Haywood's scandal chronicles. Haywood used the pseudonym "Exploralibus" and challenged her readers to guess whether the author were a man or a woman. As it turned out, The *Monthly Review* guessed the author's identity soon after it was released (Spedding 581).

Haywood's final works were polite conduct periodicals, bound for upper-class audiences. *The Wife* (December 1755), *The Young Lady* (January 1756) and *The Husband* (Feb 1756) appeared just before her death in February 1756. One of her works was published posthumously and long considered lost; Patrick Spedding happened, by accident, on a single surviving copy ("Haywood's Last"). *The History of Miss Leonora Meadowsdown* appeared in 1788.

Haywood's career is surprising because she violated so many taboos about women writers. She signed her name to many of her titles, a bold act at the time. She translated scandalous material like *The Sopha* and wrote scandalous material herself, like *Memoirs of a Certain Island*. Her work demonstrates a consistent engagement with politics, an arena that generally banned women. Several of her titles are imaginative renditions of stories in the newspapers, showing her interest in current events and society.

Her life also shows she was an extremely talented and versatile writer who experimented in almost every genre she could. She deserves to be recognized for the extraordinary writer she was.

The Life of the Author

Eliza Fowler Haywood left posterity plenty of text--more than 17,202 pages by one estimate (Spedding, *Bibliography* 764). But we know almost nothing about her life. Eight years after her death, in 1764, David Erskine Baker claimed that this was Haywood's intention. In his *Biographia Dramatica* he wrote that he had been

> credibly informed that, from a suspicion of some improper liberties being taken with her character after death, by the admixture of truth and falsehood with her history, she laid a solemn injunction on a person, who was well acquainted with all the particulars of it, not to communicate to any one the least circumstance relating to her; so that probably, unless some very ample account should appear from that quarter itself, whereby her story may be placed in a true and favorable light, the world will still be left in the dark with regard to it. All I have been able to learn is, that her father was in the mercantile way, that she was born in London, and that, at the time of her death, which was on the 25th of February, 1756, she was about sixty three years of age. (I: 216)

If Haywood took measures to destroy her personal papers and protect her privacy, she was successful. No personal correspondence or diaries have survived, except for two undated letters to unknown patrons from the Birch collection of the British Museum's Manuscript Department. These supply almost all of the information we have about Haywood's life that comes from her own hand. In the first, Haywood says a little about her family relations: "my maiden name is Fowler, and [I] am nearly related to Sir Richard of the Grange; an unfortunate marriage has reduc'd me to the melancholy necessity of depending on my Pen for the support of myself and two children, the eldest of whom is no more than 7 years of age" (qtd. Firmager, 181) Haywood's assertion here that she is related to the nobility suggests that her mother may have "married down" and become a

city merchant's wife. Since this letter seems to have been sent around March 1729 (Spedding, *Bibliography* 208n341), her first child must have been born in 1722. In another letter, Haywood writes, "the Inclinations I ever had for writing be now converted into a Necessity, by the Sudden Deaths of both a Father, and a Husband, at an age when I was little prepar'd to Stem the Tide of Ill-Fortune" (qtd. Firmager 182). Christine Blouch argues that this letter was probably written in 1728 ("Romance" 548n26). Haywood must be referring to an earlier period in her life, however, because in 1728 she had already been writing for nine years.

The final item about Haywood's personal life is also supplied by Baker, in his entry on the writer William Hatchett. Baker writes, "He acted a part in his first play, as did Mrs. Heywood, with whom he lived upon terms of friendship, and joined her in converting Fielding's *Tom Thumb* into an opera" (I: 208).

Baker's information is accepted as accurate, mainly because he could have interviewed persons who knew Haywood personally. Baker had suggested that 1693 was Haywood's date of birth, but her twentieth-century biographer, George Frisbee Whicher, was unable to find a document substantiating it. Instead, he located a birth certificate for a girl, Elizabeth, born in Cornhill in 1689, to Robert Fowler and his wife Elizabeth. Whicher seemed to accept this document because Fowler was a hosier, a fact that accords with Baker's second assertion about Haywood, "that her father was in the mercantile way, that she was born in London" (I: 216). He also found an advertisement in the *London Post-Boy* of January 7, 1721, published by a "Rev. Valentine Haywood," giving notice that his wife had eloped and he will not be responsible for her debts. Whicher seems to have accepted this candidate as Haywood's husband because "Mrs. Haywood's writings

are full of the most lively scenes of marital infelicity due to causes ranging from theological disputes to flagrant licentiousness" (4).

More recently, Christine Blouch has found evidence that invalidates Whicher's hypothesis. Although his Elizabeth Fowler cannot be excluded, there are two other candidates. One is Elizabeth Fowler born October 14, 1693 in St. Sepulchre. The other is Elizabeth Fowler, christened on January 12, 1692/3 in Shropshire. The latter was the sister of Richard Fowler of Harnage Grange, which accords with Haywood's assertion that she was nearly related to "Sir Richard of the Grange." Furthermore, Blouch discovered that Whicher's Valentine Haywood in fact married an Elizabeth Foord in Norfolk, so he could not have been Eliza Fowler's husband ("Romance" 535-539). No other candidate for Haywood's husband has been found, and we must consider the possibility that she never was married and only claimed to be a widow, perhaps to cover up a pregnancy. Many of her heroines become pregnant only to deliver a stillborn or a child who dies in a few days. Perhaps that was Haywood's case as well. If she was married, it is not clear what made her marriage "unfortunate," or even when she separated from her husband. Since her first child seems to have been born in 1722, it does not appear that she had a child from her marriage. Most scholars assume she was on her own by the time she appeared on the stage in Dublin in 1714.

In April 1717, Haywood acted in London at Lincoln's Inn Fields in *The Unhappy Favorite*. In 1719, the first installment of *Love In Excess* was published, and parts II and III were completed by February 1720. By August 1720 she was soliciting subscribers for a translation of a work by Edmé Boursault that would be published in December as *Letters From a Lady of Quality to a Chevalier*. In a letter to a potential patron, Haywood

wrote, “The stage not answering my Expectations, and the averseness of my Relations to it; has made me turn my Genius another Way” (qtd. Spedding, *Bibliography* 99). It seems, therefore, that at this time Haywood still maintained contact with her family. Aaron Hill was a subscriber to *Letters*, and Haywood became a member of his literary circle, one of the few groups of the time that encouraged women writers. Haywood’s earliest works—“elegantly produced and marketed for fashionable audiences”—show the influence of this refined coterie, notably in Haywood’s rendering of passion as a kind of “Longinian sublime” favored by Hill (King, “New Contexts” 263). As a member of this group, Haywood apparently formed close connections with Hill and the poet Richard Savage. Savage claimed to be the natural child of Richard Savage, fourth Earl Rivers (c. 1654-1712) and Anne Gerard, countess of Macclesfield (167/8-1753); the Lady denied his claim until her death. Hill and Haywood took up Savage’s cause in his pursuit of a patrimony, portraying Savage as a loving son seeking recognition from an unfeeling mother. Savage also seemed to admire Haywood. He wrote a laudatory poem for the second part of *Love in Excess* and for her novel *The Rash Resolve*. However, Hill’s circle was broken when Haywood clashed with another member of the group, the poet Martha Fowke Sansom. Haywood may have published a veiled attack on Sansom as early as 1720, in an essay attached to the *Letters From a Lady of Quality*: “An Essay on Writings of this Nature.” She was evidently directly accused of maligning Sansom as the character the Baroness De Tortillée in *The Injur’d Husband* (1722), because Haywood devotes part of the preface to asserting that no particular persons are intended. By the time Haywood was circulating the manuscript of her scandal chronicle, *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* (1724-1725), she no longer attempted to veil the

target of her attack: Mrs. Sansom, with a few letters missing, is glossed in the key. Haywood's relationship with Savage also soured, and in 1725 he published a poem, "Authors of the Town," which depicted Haywood as:

> A cast-off Dame, who of Intrigues can judge,
> Writes Scandal in Romance—A Printer's Drudge!
> Flush'd with Success, for Stage Renown she pants,
> And melts, and swells, and pens luxurious Rants. (10)

And, in 1728, he repeated his disdain for Haywood in his pamphlet, *An Author to Be Lett* (1729).

Savage is also considered the source for much of the scurrilous gossip in Alexander Pope's attack on Grub Street, *The Dunciad*. Pope depicts Haywood:

> See in the circle next *Eliza* plac'd;
> Two babes of love close clinging to her waste;
> Fair as before her works she stands confes'd,
> In flower'd brocade by bounteous *Kirkall* dres'd,
> Pearls on her neck, and roses in her hair,
> And her fore-buttocks to the navel bare. (II: 136-141)

Pope's vulgar description shows a viciousness he does not seem to feel for the other "dunces." The "two babes of love" function in the poem on several levels. First, this scene is a burlesque of a scene in the *Aeneid* in which the prize of a contest is a slave woman with two babies. Second, the two babes can refer to Haywood's two scandal chronicles, *Utopia* and *Caramania*, that contained personal attacks on several of Pope's friends, and which were certainly at least part of the reason he skewers Haywood in *The Dunciad*. Third, Pope may be referring to two actual illegitimate children of the author. These babes are later identified by Edmund Curll in his *Compleat Key to the Dunciad* (1728) as the "offspring of a poet and a bookseller" (12). Critics have long concluded that the poet was Richard Savage, and the bookseller was William Hatchett, the man

Baker named as Haywood's friendly roommate. William Spedding has pointed out that the problem with identifying Hatchett as the father is that he was not a bookseller; and, while he could be described as a poet, there is no evidence of a connection between him and Haywood before 1729, when Haywood's name appears on the subscription list for Hatchett's *Morals of Princes* (*Bibliography* 703). Since Haywood's 1729 letter indicates her two children were already born, Hatchett may not have been the father of either one.

Richard Savage is commonly accepted as the father of one of Haywood's children. The enmity Haywood bore Martha Sansom appears to many critics like that of a woman scorned, perhaps a result of Savage dropping Haywood for her rival. Recently, Kathryn King has challenged what she calls the "Savage Love" hypothesis by asserting that no sources confirm it. "Much of what is regarded these days as most scandalous about the life is little more than dubious supposition based on imagined fact," she writes ("Savage Love" 723). For her argument, King notes that the love triangle does not appear in the work of any of Haywood's acquaintances; that a love child with a well-known man like Savage would certainly have inspired comment; and that Haywood, the woman scorned, nowhere depicts Savage and Sansom as lovers. King reads Haywood's fond depictions of Savage as evidence of their friendship and perhaps a kind of sibling protectiveness, not as the evidence of passionate love. Rather than jealousy over Savage, Haywood's dispute with Sansom was the latter's affair with Aaron Hill, a married man. In *Poems on Several Occasions*, Haywood had idealized Hill as a mentor and fellow poet. According to King's reading of *The Injured Husband* and *Utopia*, Sansom enlisted Savage to come between Hill and Haywood because Sansom was having an affair with Hill and was jealous of Haywood's close friendship with her lover. Savage, having once enlisted Haywood as a

sponsor, was merely courting a new benefactor in the person of Martha Sansom—an older woman with money and influence ("Savage Love").

King's argument is persuasive. There is no direct evidence that Haywood and Savage were lovers or that Savage was the father of one of her children. It seems that her children were born out of wedlock, but we will probably never know the identity of the father(s). We do know that she had at least a professional relationship with William Hatchett, who was probably born around 1701 and who lived at least until 1749 (Spedding, *Bibliography* 787). During the 1730's Haywood and Hatchett turned their "genius" to the theater. Most notably, they collaborated on the adaptation of Henry Fielding's *Tragedy of Tragedies* (1731) into a very successful comic opera, *The Opera of Operas* (1733). Haywood appeared in Hatchett's plays *The Rival Father* (1730) and *A Rehearsal of Kings* (1737). She also acted in four other plays in the 1730's: *The Blazing Comet* (1732), her own *Arden of Feversham* (1736) and Henry Fielding's *The Historical Register for the Year 1736* (1737) and *Eurydice Hiss'd* (1737). Fielding had previously both gently lampooned her status as a bestselling writer and paid homage to her popularity with the character "Mrs. Novel" in his 1730 play *The Author's Farce* (King, "Feudlings").

After the Licensing Act of 1737 effectively closed the theaters, Haywood resumed work as a novelist with *Anti-Pamela* in 1741, the first of her titles that she attempted to bring to market herself. Around this time, she began a new professional venture—that of bookseller. As a woman who probably lacked capital, she had to collaborate with men already established in the profession. Thus, it appears that Haywood entered into partnerships with Francis Cogan and J. Huggonson in order to build up her business

(Spedding, *Bibliography* 357). We still have little information about her efforts in the trade, but there are a number of titles, mainly pamphlets, that were advertised with her imprint: “New Books sold by Eliza Haywood, Publisher, at the Sign of Fame in Covent Garden.” Patrick Spedding asserts that Haywood “published” at least nine titles. Some of these were her own work and some were William Hatchett’s; others remain obscure (*Bibliography* 675-693). As Kathryn King points out, the title “publisher” is misleading: “In period usage, ‘publisher’ referred to someone who sold and distributed printed material. It did not imply publication in a modern sense of arranging and financing the printing of a work” (“Sign of Fame,” 84n4). Although we still know little of the details, Haywood did maintain a business at “the sign of Fame” in Covent Garden. By 1744, it appears that Haywood’s business had become that of mercury, “a pamphlet and newspaper seller which was considered a level below that of a bookseller,” but a trade that more readily accommodated women (Spedding, *Bibliography* 690). In 1744, Haywood sold off her business. Kathryn King has located an advertisement for the sale of her furnishings that supplies interesting details of the author’s life. The shop at the “sign of Fame” was “just north of Russell St at the southeast corner of the Great Piazza [in Covent Garden], No. 18-19 in the numbering system later adopted” (King, “Sign of Fame,” 84). Period engravings prove that the “glass-fronted shop would have occupied the ground-floor of a handsome, four-storied residence” (King, “Sign of Fame,” 84). Haywood resided above the shop, and according to the items listed for sale, including pictures, a grandfather clock, card tables and four poster beds, King concludes, “Her circumstances during this period were more comfortable and her household more extended than scholars have imagined” (“Sign of Fame” 85).

Although she sold her shop and moved to Durham Yard in the Strand, Haywood continued to act as mercury. Additional details of her business are revealed in the records of her arrest for seditious libel, after she wrote, printed and distributed an anonymous pamphlet glorifying the Pretender: *A Letter From H—G—g, Esq.* (1749). In attempting to discover the author of the pamphlet, authorities interviewed booksellers as well as Haywood and her maid. Several booksellers testified that copies of the pamphlet had been left at their establishments for sale. Charles Corbett, a collaborator of Haywood's, testified that William Hatchett asked the following day "if a porter had not left Twenty five pamphlets at his Shop the night before from Mrs. Haywood" (qtd. Spedding, *Bibliography* 750). Corbett admitted that he thought Haywood was the author. Other booksellers admitted the pamphlets were from Haywood, but denied knowing the author. Haywood's servant, Hannah Shredder, testified that she did not know where the sheets had come from, but that she had stitched them together and distributed them, at the direction of her mistress. Elizabeth Haywood, Widow, of Durham Yard in the Strand, testified she did not know who wrote or published the pamphlet, and that she frequently found materials left at her house for sale, and that normally the owner would seek payment later, although no one had yet inquired about this work (qtd. Spedding, *Bibliography* 749-757). Haywood was not prosecuted further, although it is not clear why. The testimony in this case gives us a clearer view of her career as a mercury. "Haywood had a more complicated and sustained relationship with other booksellers as some sort of 'middle-man' or distributor of politically-oriented publications," Catherine Ingrassia notes ("Additional Information" 204).

Haywood continued to write until her death on February 25, 1756. In 1752 she had moved to Cowley Street, and, after her death, tax records indicate the house was inhabited by a "Mr. Hayward" and his wife—Spedding believes this to be her son and daughter-in-law (*Bibliography* 274). Her obituary in the February 24-26, 1756 edition of the *Whitehall Evening-Post*, no. 1562, settles the date of her death:

> Yesterday Morning died, in the 60th year of her Age, after a very severe Illness of three Months, which she bore with great Fortitude and Resignation, Mrs. Eliza Haywood, the celebrated Authoress of some of the best Moral and Entertaining Pieces that have been publish'd for these many Years. The great Hand she had in those elegant Productions the Female Spectator, and Epistles for the Ladies; together with her Histories of Miss Betsy Thoughtless, Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy, her Invisible Spy, and the Fortunate Foundlings, will remain as living Monuments of her Merit. ([3])

The author is buried at St. Margaret's parish churchyard, London (Blouch, "Romance" 535).

Haywood's life is as surprising as her career. She was a true maverick, living independently or with a man, apparently unmarried. She was also a mother, a businesswoman, and a citizen journalist. It seems she was intrepid about everything she did, from her manner of living to her manner of writing. It is certainly no coincidence that a woman who occupied the position as social outcast because of her reputation and defiance of social norms was also a writer especially attuned to her society's hypocrisy. Like her characters, she viewed society from the outside, and this gave her the power to criticize. Even when the market demanded more reactionary attitudes, Haywood never gave up her role as social critic, and her social position made her question her culture's truths.

Repetition and Meaning

A study of Haywood's early novels must confront the problem of her repetitive use of plots of seduction and betrayal. Both Richetti and Warner characterize Haywood's early novels as formulaic. In trying to account for her "embarrassing popularity" Richetti argues that these novels repeat the "fable of persecuted innocence, exploiting over and over again the same erotic-pathetic clichés and the same rhetoric of love's power and the tragic and compulsive dramatic universe it implies" (*Popular Fiction* 120, 208). Warner also argues that Haywood's fiction is similar to modern pulp fiction in its easily reproducible plots (111-16). In their view, Haywood has found a formula that sells, and she sticks with it.

Neither critic, in my opinion, has adequately explained a more important question: Why did they sell? Ros Ballaster has argued that Haywood's books offered women readers an outlet for suppressed sexual desires. A woman could not violate sexual norms, but she could read about it:

> The eroticism of these texts extends to the reader a means of 'gratifying passion' without 'sacrificing honour', releasing guilt from the practice of rape-fantasy. Fiction both compensates for and challenges the limits of reality. Haywood thus offers her readers a method of escape from masculine closure through the re-enactment of fictional feminine identities, or the practice of subversive mimesis . . . Unrealistic though Haywood's fictional world is, it constantly reinscribes the 'truth' of women's oppression at the hands of men, and seeks to compensate them with the pleasures of fiction. (195)

According to Ballaster, the representation of women's oppression, which we must assume is unpleasant to the reader, is nonetheless accepted by the reader in exchange for the pleasure she obtains by reading about and vicariously experiencing sexual transgression. However, studies of current romance readers show they do not want to read about unpleasant realities. Janice A. Radway found that loyal readers chose to read

romance novels primarily in order to escape from their domestic duties, and the pleasure of escape requires a happy ending: in romance terms, a wedding (86-118). Ideologically, these novels do not challenge cultural norms but reinforce cultural stereotypes about male and female relationships. “In effect,” Radway notes, “[readers] are instructed about the nature of patriarchy and its meaning for them as women, that is, as individuals who do not possess power in a society dominated by men. Not only does the romantic drama evoke the material consequences of refusal to mold oneself in the image of femininity prescribed by the culture but it also displays the remarkable benefits of conformity” (149). Not surprisingly, then, a “failed romance” for these readers is one in which the unpleasant realities of patriarchy are addressed (157-85). Haywood’s relentlessly serious, even grim representations of women’s suffering and social injustice seem antithetical to the purposes of entertainment, from which we generally expect happy resolutions. At least, if one function of romantic entertainment is escape from the reality of social injustice, Haywood denies her readers that pleasure.

Should we instead see the repeated telling of the seduction-betrayal story as evidence of the writer’s personal trauma? Was Haywood herself seduced and abandoned (and left with a baby)? Although we know too little of her life either to confirm or deny this possibility, it is consistent with what little we do know. Or, should we understand these repetitive readings as evidence of a collective trauma—the “trauma of female subjectivation” experienced by women as modern patriarchy took hold (Tauchert 58)?

Again, we return to the question: why is a seduction that ends in trauma a compelling story for Haywood to tell and her readers to read again and again? Ashley

Tauchert suggests that repetitive conventions and plots may denote a feminine mode of writing:

> Women's early prose narratives display a repetitive preoccupation with 'primal scenes' of rape/seduction; stylistic and character repetition; and staged performances of ambiguities of meaning in shared acts of 'love'. . . Women narrative writers remain throughout [the century] preoccupied with 'amatory romance' as a generic tendency, in spite of—as well as because of—their pretensions to 'the novel'. (59)

Her claim is supported by evidence that other women writers of the 1720s wrote about rape, seduction and passion as much as Haywood did (Prescott). What then, do these repetitions from female writers signify? Tauchert theorizes that the female-authored amatory romance of this period may be a parallel but alternative form to the realistic novel that comes to dominate novel production later in the century. She asks us to consider the possibility that

> Amatory romance perhaps renders a female-embodied epistemological claim at odds with consolidated novelistic 'realism'. . . Perhaps we should be reading women's early prose fiction for a raw and largely unmediated version of the female-embodied 'I was born' story, and this would take us to evidence of a differently situtated truth-claim, traditionally understood as simply mistaken or false. (62)

If this is true, the woman's "I was born" story begins with her first sexual experience. Haywood's work is notably novelistic in this regard.

In this study I will argue that Haywood understands the moment of seduction as the beginning of a woman's self-consciousness, and that is why she returns to it again and again. By expressing—however passively—her desire, the heroine becomes a knowing subject. Her first sexual experience marks her departure from her father's house and her entry into adulthood; this experience is supposed to take place in a marriage that will transfer her subservience from father to husband. However, Haywood's heroines achieve

adulthood outside of the institution that is supposed to protect them. Outside of a father's or husband's authority, they are radically free. The inevitable trauma that follows makes the heroine aware of the social structures that limit women's consciousness. She can suddenly see her world as it really is. The consequence of this knowledge is that she is cast out of society. But this is not the end of the heroine's story. Her life does not begin and end with heterosexual love, which is a popular trope in other novels. Instead, the heroine survives. Sometimes she even triumphs in a limited way. By narrating her heroine's survival, Haywood insists that women are more than sexual beings and calls attention to possibilities of female freedom. In a world that increasingly viewed women as objects of exchange, Haywood reaffirms their human worth.

The majority of this study focuses on the seduction-betrayal novels of the 1720s. Chapter One compares Haywood's early 1720s novels of fallen women to the bourgeois she-tragedy and argues that Haywood rejected the bourgeois ideology of personal responsibility, insisting instead that women do not have the power to control their circumstances. Her views are inflected with an older religious attitude about the fallen nature of man and a powerful critique of libertinism as aristocratic privilege. She also imagines alternative endings for the fallen woman who, in she-tragedy, always must die. Thus, Haywood shows that it is possible to defy prevailing codes for female behavior.

Chapter Two shifts to Haywood's first overtly political text, which is nonetheless replete with amatory fictions. I argue that in *Memoirs of a Certain Island,* Haywood records the pervasive injustice in her society, one that worships money and pursues personal ambition without regard to social cost. Her novel stands as a critique of the idea of meritocracy: her rising men are greedy hypocrites who advance through graft and

crime. The public corruption of the government and social elites is transposed to a series of amatory fictions in which a woman of real merit is displaced by an unworthy woman.

Chapter Three examines Haywood's novels from the later 1720s that are primarily concerned with the exchange of money and women on the marriage market and the legal mechanisms that prevent women from obtaining their rights. In contrast to her fallen women stories from the beginning of the decade, Haywood's seducers are no longer aristocrats but bourgeois city men, preying on gullible women from the middle ranks. The new villain shows that Haywood did not accept the bourgeois claim to moral superiority: both aristocrat and merchant exploit women. Her increasing interest in law and the courts testifies to her increasing understanding of the larger power structures that regulate and control women's lives.

Chapter Four examines Haywood's 1751 novel, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*. Long viewed as Haywood's capitulation to literary convention, I show how this novel was shockingly original and bold in its critique of the status of women in English society. Moreover, I show that in this book Haywood articulates a modern feminist awareness that all women share political interests because of their gender. Haywood's proto-feminism becomes all the more noteworthy when we compare her work with Mary Wollstonecraft's.

CHAPTER ONE
"DEARLY SHE PAID FOR BREACH OF GOOD BEHAVIOUR": FALLEN WOMEN

Modern literary critics, especially feminists, have been puzzled by Eliza Haywood's depictions of seduction. According to Susan Staves, Haywood seems "simultaneously to insist on the irresistibility of love and to blame the victims of desire" (*Literary History* 193). Ros Ballaster notes "Haywood's heroines are both indulged and punished for succumbing to sexual desire" (*Seductive Forms* 170). What Staves calls the "incoherence" in Haywood's texts is the manifestation of a historical moment when English culture began to assimilate a bourgeois ideology of personal responsibility but had not completely let go of an older, religious worldview that viewed human beings of both sexes to be fallen creatures susceptible to temptation and sin. It is also a moment when the formation of patriarchy initiates new theories of gender difference. These larger cultural discourses all figure in Haywood's work, and she directly questions them. In her fallen women stories Haywood shows that new standards of personal responsibility clash with a growing sentimentalism that identifies women with emotion. Denied reason yet punished for emotional expression, powerless in both mundane and religious worlds beyond their control, Haywood's heroines serve to expose the fault lines in the bourgeois moral order. Haywood creates, instead, among female characters and readers (of either sex) a community of sympathy that recognizes virtue as a moral, not a physical, trait and that values women as souls rather than as property. This chapter examines four novels by Haywood that she originally intended to publish together under the title, *The Danger of Giving Way to Passion, in Five Exemplary Novels*. As the title suggests, Haywood

conceived of these as companion pieces, exemplary tales that comprise an extended meditation on the problem of fallen women.[1]

Fallen Women and the Double Standard

Stories of fallen women were oddly popular in the eighteenth century, and the public apparently shed many tears over their tragic misfortunes. But what accounts for the popularity of this figure? And what elicits sympathy in the audience for her plight? Susan Staves suggests the fallen woman is a paradoxical creature, neither wholly sinful nor wholly virtuous ("British Seduced Maidens" 114). The fallen woman popular in literature is always pretty and genteel, indicating that audiences extended their pity to women who were expected to be chaste, as opposed to lower-class women who were not endowed with the sexual virtue of the bourgeois woman ("British Seduced Maidens" 117). In fact, it may be the fallen woman's adherence to the standards of bourgeois ideology that makes her so tragic. She exemplifies the ideal female virtues: she is beautiful, innocent, trusting and affectionate ("British Seduced Maidens" 118). These same virtues prove a liability when a seducer takes advantage of them. The virtuous bourgeois woman, it seems, enables her own destruction. Fallen women are also sympathetic because they are always the victims of an unequal contest in which the man has the advantage ("British Seduced Maidens" 116). Eighteenth-century England made no pretensions about women's equality, and acknowledged women's relative lack of power. A fallen woman is not raped, however. A crucial element in her tragedy is that she gave her consent, however tacit, to her seduction ("British Seduced Maidens" 114). In an age that supposedly prized companionate marriage, a woman's consent represented her

[1] The fifth novel, *The Injur'd Husband; or The Mistaken Resentment* (1723), is omitted here because it is not a fallen woman story.

choice of partner, a choice usually denied her in an arranged marriage. Fallen women stories tend to illustrate that women are not capable of making good choices on their own.

Staves argues that the fallen woman story evokes tears not only for the innocent maiden lost to the bourgeoisie, but also for her family, and especially for her father. Writers generally devote substantial attention to the grief of the family, and Staves believes this attention expresses a nostalgia for a simpler time, when families were untroubled by affective individualism or rebellious daughters. The fallen woman story, in other words, marks a threat to the patriarchal family ("British Seduced Maidens" 133-34). The legal system, however, still upheld the rights of the father, and like literature, viewed him as the real victim. The father of a seduced daughter could seek a legal remedy against the seducer through two mechanisms: a charge of aggravated trespass, or a suit for damages to compensate him for his daughter's services ("British Seduced Maidens" 128). The reasoning in the latter case is that the daughter acts as a kind of servant to her father, and just as the law prohibited one man from enticing another man's servant into his own service, so a daughter should not be enticed. In addition, because the law viewed the father as the injured party, his injured feelings could be taken into account in figuring damages, a consideration not allowed for other kinds of cases ("British Seduced Maidens" 129). Staves sees these new legal remedies as evidence of growing secularization ("British Seduced Maidens" 110). The church courts increasingly declined to get in involved with illicit sex, except in the cases of the lower class. The upper classes were left to handle the problem on their own. Thus, the sin of fornication gave way to the financial loss of a daughter's service. It is a shift from concern over the loss of a soul to concern over the loss of property. Yet Staves notes that the legal remedy for recovering

damages is not represented in literature, a discrepancy that she thinks represents the limits of realism in the novel ("British Seduced Maidens" 133). However, an alternative explanation is that novels did not represent legal proceedings in order to naturalize the idea that the problem of seduction was a private one, and that the victim is responsible for her own ruin. Although seducers could be brought to account in the courts, novels seemed to deny that seduction was a social problem by omitting this remedy.

The sexual double standard that created the fallen woman was long standing and generally accepted as an unavoidable reality by most writers. "Stated simply," writes Keith Thomas, "it is the view that unchastity, in the sense of sexual relations before marriage or outside marriage, is for a man, if an offense, none the less a mild and pardonable one, but for a woman a matter of the utmost gravity" ("Double Standard" 195). English society had long granted men sexual freedom—both premarital and extramarital—and simultaneously denied that freedom to women. The English government, for the most part, tolerated prostitution as a necessary evil because men were naturally lustful (Thomas, "Double Standard" 198). Bernard Mandeville in *A Modest Defence of Publick Stews* (1724) argued that brothels protected the chastity of well-born women by providing men with sexual partners. Mandeville's argument reveals a longstanding cultural prejudice: there are two kinds of women: virtuous, marriageable women and prostitutes.

Female chastity had long been valued in the upper classes where marriages were arranged for family advantage. Female chastity after marriage was necessary to ensure that only legitimate heirs inherited family property. Female chastity before marriage was also expected in higher circles. Under feudal law, an unchaste heiress lost her inheritance.

In this case, her lost virginity meant that her father would lose "the value of the woman's marriage" (Thomas, "Double Standard" 211). As the middle class grew in the seventeenth-century, it adopted many upper-class customs, including the emphasis on female chastity. Although the bourgeoisie was also concerned about the transfer of family property to legitimate heirs, this was not the only reason women were denied sexual freedom. "The double standard," Keith Thomas writes, "is the reflection of the view that men have property in women and that the value of this property is immeasurably diminished if the woman at any time has sexual relations with anyone other than her husband" ("Double Standard" 211). The "deeply entrenched idea that a woman's chastity was not hers to dispose of" also concerned unmarried women, since "girls who have lost their 'honor' have also lost their saleability in the marriage market" ("Double Standard" 210).

Men's claims to exclusive possession of women led to "a highly exaggerated view of the innate differences between the two sexes themselves" (Thomas 214). Men were accepted as sexual beings, but women were denied sexual feelings. As the power of sentimental ideas grew, women were increasingly desexualized, and the absence of sexual desire became an essential trait of the virtuous woman as portrayed in literature. As Patricia Spacks notes, this suppression of female sexuality registers itself in literature by women writers as a "psychic conflict." "It is specifically sexuality," she writes, "that women fear cannot be regulated or contained" (36), and yet society demanded that women control it. "Passion lies within, the self is the ultimate enemy, the struggle is endless. The intolerable awareness of internal division is a dominant feminine experience" Spacks theorizes (36). When literary heroines do express sexual feelings, it

is essential that they do not consciously realize what they are doing. Eliza Haywood, for instance, frequently represents women as unconscious, dreaming, or overcome by irresistible feelings. “Eliza Haywood’s heroines,” Spacks writes, “have trouble waking up. [They] enact a vision of irresponsible sexuality without being subject to judgment. Only under such special circumstances can sexuality be separated from the need to moralize” (33). Thus, even early in the century an excuse had to be found for a woman who expressed sexual feelings. By the end of the century, cultural ideology had accepted “the total desexualization of women” (Thomas, “Double Standard” 215).

Spacks also observes that women writers often blamed women’s sexual transgression on faulty education. While men seemed to value total ignorance in women, even to extolling the beauty of a “virgin mind,” women writers never failed to depict the dangers of female ignorance (29-30). Spacks writes, “They understand that innocence is a broad avenue to corruption” (30). Ending the tyranny of ignorance is one of Eliza Haywood’s favorite themes. Her compromised maidens are inevitably too gullible, too believing and too inexperienced to suspect a lying seducer.

Fallen Women on the Stage

Eliza Haywood was not alone in meditating on the tragedy of female sexuality. The problem of female sexual transgression was frequently represented on the stage, and the theater constituted the primary cultural mechanism for circulating ideas about fallen women. In the early years of the Restoration, English theaters produced heroic plays that featured strong, virtuous queens and princesses. But the heroic play’s popularity gradually gave way to the rise of what Laura Brown terms “affective drama” and female protagonists became passive victims of suffering—suffering that is usually caused by

sexual taint. According to Brown, affective drama "portrays a new kind of heroine, whose victimization provides the essential material of the plot and whose defenselessness constitutes a specific contrast to the defiance of the passionate and ambitious female characters in the preceding heroic play" (Brown, "Defenseless Woman" 430). Because the goal of the affective drama is to inspire pity, it is a form that avoids moral judgment. Brown explains, "affective tragedy explicitly detaches itself from any hierarchy of values . . . and presents simple suffering, unqualified by cause or blame" (*English Dramatic Form* 99). In Thomas Otway's *The Orphan* (1680), for instance, the act of incest that destroys the three main characters is unintentional. Monima has secretly married Castalio, but his twin brother Polydore is unaware of their marriage when he substitutes himself for his brother in Monima's bed. They wake in the morning and discover their unwitting sin; each displays wretched misery before committing suicide, but Monima's suffering is paramount. Likewise, in Thomas Southerne's *The Fatal Marriage; or, The Innocent Adultery* (1694), the protagonist Isabella thinks her husband dead and unknowingly commits bigamy by remarrying. When her husband turns up alive, Southerne treats the audience to extended scenes of Isabella's misery, including her weeping, bemoaning her fate, condemning herself to death, and experiencing an Ophelia-like madness before stabbing herself. The aim of evoking tears in the audience probably followed what Eric Rothstein has called the "affective" theory of tragedy: namely, that an audience watching a tragedy is morally improved through the experience of emotion while watching the play (307). According to drama historian Robert Hume, by the end of the eighteenth-century, "most writers subscribe to the idea that the playwright's object was to *rouse emotion*—the more the better" (*Development* 175).

By Haywood's day, the affective drama had given way to the "bourgeois drama." This genre represented middle-class characters and realistic action. According to Brown,

> The heroic play's remoteness from the recognizable behavior of the common man is deliberately denied by the moralized bourgeois tragedy. The new form is mundane, local, sentimental and realistic. It replaces social status with inner moral worth, distance and elevation with immediacy and domesticity, admiration with sympathy, artificiality with naturalness, and verse with prose. ("Defenseless Woman" 436)

Bourgeois drama, because it insisted on inner moral worth, necessitated moral judgment of the characters. Sometimes this required playwrights to present paragons of virtue, however dull and lifeless. For moralized versions of the feminine tragedy, playwrights introduced agency and its consequent moral blame. Now women would suffer because they intentionally commit a sexual transgression.

Nicholas Rowe's play, *The Fair Penitent* (1703), marks the debut of the moralized "she-tragedy."[2] It is a fallen woman story similar to those Haywood would write later, and it is instructive for the contrast it provides to the way Haywood treats this topic. In this play, the patriarch Sciolto has arranged for his daughter Calista to marry the honorable Altamont. When the play opens, the men anticipate a joyful wedding and look forward to becoming father and son, but Calista has already been seduced by her father's enemy, Lothario. She marries Altamont but her unchastity is revealed, leading to Sciolto's death and her suicide. Although the genre creates expectations for a sympathetic heroine, Calista's characterization was controversial: she is not raped or tricked into incest or bigamy, she is merely seduced by her lover. Lothario brags:

> I snatched the glorious, golden opportunity,
> And with prevailing, youthful ardor pressed her,

[2] Rowe coined the term himself in the epilogue to his play, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (1714).

> Till with short sighs and murmuring reluctance
> The yielding fair one gave me perfect happiness
> Ev'n all the livelong night we passed in bliss (1.157-160)

Calista's too common fault made her less worthy of the audience's pity. "This representation of sexual agency, muted though it is, incited a flurry of attacks on Rowe's plays," Jean Marsden confirms. "By yielding to Lothario . . . Calista becomes suspect, more akin to a prostitute . . . than a true heroine" (150).

Although the genre creates the expectation that the heroine will be deserving of pity, Calista's defiance of her father also constitutes a serious flaw, especially in a bourgeois play. Calista loves Lothario against her father's commands and writes to him and meets him in secret. On her wedding day, she sulks. She resents her father's power over her. Her complaints might have resonated with a public that was becoming more accustomed to the idea of companionate marriage. Calista protests the sad predicament of women in this monologue:

> How hard is the condition of our sex,
> Through ev'ry state of life the slaves of man!
> In all the dear, delightful days of youth
> A rigid father dictates to our wills,
> And deals out pleasure with a scanty hand;
> To his, the tyrant husband's reign succeeds;
> Proud with opinion of superior reason,
> He holds domestic business and devotion
> All we are capable to know, and shuts us,
> Like cloistered idiots, from the world's acquaintance
> And all the joys of freedom; wherefore are we
> Born with high souls but to assert ourselves,
> Shake off this vile obedience they exact,
> And claim an equal empire over the world? (3.39-52)

This speech, which is frequently cited today as evidence of Rowe's proto-feminist sentiments, would have troubled an eighteenth-century audience. Charles Gildon mocks

Rowe for making Calista "unpardonable and obstinate" (57). And Samuel Johnson, in his *Lives of the Poets* (1779), famously accuses her of only being penitent about being caught (22: 586). A discussion in Henry Mackenzie's periodical *The Lounger* later in the century calls Calista one of "that fierce, unbending, and unfeminine sort, which we cannot easily pity in misfortune or forgive in error" (I: 202). If the eighteenth century saw a rise in expectations for companionate marriage, a daughter's wishes were still suspect.

We may applaud Calista for her desire for equality, but her desire for "equal empire" with men runs "directly counter to contemporary views of a woman's role" (Marsden 155); and her obvious unfitness for such power discredits all her claims. Astute viewers would notice that however eloquently Calista complains, she is absolutely wrong. Her father is not a rigid dictator, and her husband is not a tyrant. Instead of promoting greater choice in marriage, this play shows that father still knows best. Although Calista foolishly loves Lothario, her father chooses the better man for her. In Act V she even admits she would have been happy with Altamont. Not only does her disobedience destroy her family, it threatens to destroy society itself. The town is split between Lothario's and Sciolto's men in a civil war. By the end of the play, Calista has, in effect, become a parricide: Sciolto is killed in battle. Lisa Freeman observes, "Rowe intimates that there is something inherently dangerous about daughters that puts the ideal patriarchal vision in jeopardy, and he implies that daughters might constitute both the greatest potentiality and the greatest liability of that project" (130). That is, obedient women like Calista's foil, Lavinia, represent the greatest potentiality for ensuring bourgeois social order, while independent women like Calista represent society's greatest threat. Rather than finding Calista's complaints valid, the audience awaited her

punishment and anguish. The speech in which Calista mourns her own foolishness is fitting as Rowe's message to the rebellious daughter:

> Now think thou, cursed Calista, now behold
> The desolation, horror, blood, and ruin
> Thy crimes and fatal folly spread around
> That loudly call for vengeance on thy head;
> Yet heav'n, who knows our weak, imperfect natures,
> How blind with passions and how prone to evil,
> Makes not too strict enquiry for offenses,
> But is atoned by penitence and pray'r.
> Cheap recompense! Here 'twould not be received;
> Nothing but blood can make expiation,
> And cleanse the soul from inbred, deep pollution. (5.148-58)

This speech first references the social chaos she has created, then her complete inability to make amends for it. Calista blames her female weakness, a fault that heaven might forgive but that requires a harsher punishment by men. Rowe protracts her humiliation for two acts—from the exposure of her unchastity in Act IV to her own suicide in Act V. The moralized she-tragedy demanded such extreme punishment. "The only way in which a woman who had behaved unchastely could satisfactorily demonstrate her repentance was through prolonged and visible suffering," Marsden notes. "Death alone would not suffice" (150-51). "Dearly she paid for Breach of good Behaviour" concludes the epilogue (2).

Calista's catastrophe is apparently caused by obstinate willfulness, disobedience, female propensity to "evil" and blind passion. Altamont's friend Horatio, the play's morally severe representative of normative values, indicates that such disasters are caused merely by women's stupidity:

> Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom ye trust,
> Did you but think how seldom fools are just,

> So many of your sex would not in vain
> Of broken vows and faithless men complain. (2.169-72)

Horatio offers a simple solution: women should just use their heads, and they would easily avoid unworthy men. And, needless to say, they should listen to their fathers.

If earlier affective tragedies avoided questions of blame in order to invoke emotion, bourgeois she-tragedies clearly affix blame—on the woman who desires freedom and equality. The problem for bourgeois drama is that a faulty character, because she is guilty, cannot be truly sympathetic. A perfect character, however, fails to generate enough interest to sustain the action. For this reason Brown argues that drama diminishes in importance in the eighteenth century in favor of the novel, because the novel is the better vehicle for exploring the new standard of inner moral worth (*English Dramatic Form*). Brown cites Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding as the inventors of the bourgeois novel, but Eliza Haywood preceded them both in her attempt to answer the problems of female tragedy created on the stage. Her fallen women stories incorporate elements of affective tragedy and bourgeois drama as she attempts to give an account of why women transgress and whether they deserve severe punishment. Her explanation is slightly more complicated than Horatio's. Haywood shows instead that men are more to blame for the fall of an uneducated, innocent young woman.

The Power of Love: *Lasselia*

Haywood's novels are often identified with the romance even though many elements in her fiction are not consistent with romance conventions. However, one idea she shares with the romance tradition is the belief that love is a transcendent, sublime experience. Stephen Ahearn describes it as "the primal story of the myth of romantic love that had ruled the West for centuries: strangers meet, exchange glances, and experience

love at first sight, according to which each recognizes the other as a soul mate predestined to make the self whole and to stop the yearning for self-completion that is the cause of suffering in life" (39). This kind of love is usually reserved for aristocratic characters; delicacy of feeling is associated with higher rank (18). Haywood frequently uses these tropes. The power of love to occasion transcendence of self associates it with religious experience. The irresistible power of love, which arises from within but cannot be controlled, associates it with irrational forces beyond the control of reason. The universe of the romance is a providential one, in which higher, supernatural forces govern the lives of men and women through chance and magic. This universe is alien to an ideology of personal responsibility, since the power of feelings suggests a "limit of sovereignty over the embodied self" (Ahearn 78).

Lasselia; or, The Self-Abandoned (1723) is a perfect example of the "erotic sublime" Ahearn discusses. The title describes the consequence of passion's power: loss of self-control. Lasselia's capitulation to passion is more astonishing given her many admirable, superior qualities. The niece to one of Louis XIV's mistresses, Lasselia flees the French court to avoid becoming a royal mistress herself, refusing "to be purchas'd at a Rate so dear as loss of Virtue" (110). Her preference for sexual purity over influence and wealth demonstrates her inner moral worth. She goes to friends in the country, where she meets a married man, Monsieur de l'Amye, and experiences an immediate attraction to him. She attempts to deny her feelings, but she gradually succumbs to desire. He is also caught under the spell of Eros, and pursues her until she admits her passion. De l'Amye moves Lasselia to an inn where they can carry on their affair in complete secrecy. An old enemy of de l'Amye eventually exposes him. His wife and Lasselia's friends

discover them together, and Lasselia attempts to stab herself but is disarmed. De l'Amye is persuaded to return to his wife, and Lasselia retires to a convent.

How could such a virtuous and strong-willed young woman become the victim of such a catastrophe? One answer is that Lasselia is the victim of supernatural forces. Upon meeting de l'Ayme, he suffers a nosebleed, an event that superstition understood as "a portent of doom" (113; 115n17). Another reason for Lasselia's catastrophe is that human beings are frail, and no one, even a superior specimen like Lasselia can resist the power of passion once it takes hold. This is a more religious view of the individual as fallen and sinful. In terms of the romance idealization of love, however, it is almost a sin to resist it. Yet Haywood shows that Lasselia attempts to fight her feelings. When she first suspects she feels love, she is utterly shocked that she is capable of such a feeling for a married man (114-15). She banishes the thought of him, and takes the prudent step of avoiding his company. Yet her struggle seems doomed to fail, because her imagination brings back the image of de l'Amye: "she was at last convinc'd, how fatal an Enemy to Repose, the sight of an Object too amiable may prove; but tho she resolv'd not to give way to an Impression so pernicious, she found it impossible to erase it" (115). Her eyes have already taken his impression, and her body now fights against her attempts at self-control. Lasselia then rationalizes to herself that she can enjoy de l'Amye's presence without a danger to herself:

> The Pleasure she took in the company of *de l'Amye* was too great to be resisted, nor did she any more make herself uneasy at those Shocks which, every now and then, endeavour'd to check the Transports she indulg'd—She thought it enough that she restrain'd her Wishes within the Bounds of Modesty; and perceiving not the least reason to imagine, by his Behaviour, that he would ever tempt her to transgress them, believ'd she might, without a Crime, indulge herself in those Felicities which at present appear'd so innocent. (116)

The “shocks” are her moral conscience, which knows it is wrong to love a married man. Her body yearns for the pleasure of the “transports” he inspires. So she allows herself his company and only attempts to control the outward show of her feelings. But Lasselia is wrong; de l’Amye will tempt her. Not only does he feel the same passion, but, as a male, he can act on his desire. The narrator seems to absolve both Lasselia and de l’Amye of blame, however, since they are merely pawns of a higher power. The narrator’s explanation blames the god of Love: “Love is a subtle, and a watchful Deceiver, and directs the Votary he designs to bless, to make the Attack when the *Fair* is least capable of Resistance” (117). When Lasselia accepts de l’Amye’s embraces, she again is depicted as a victim of forces she cannot control:

> It was in vain she struggled to rise—in vain that she endeavour’d to repel the soft Endearments of his Lips and Arms . . . She had too much Frankness in her Nature, and had been too little accustomed to Artifice, to be able to disguise her Sentiments at a Juncture like this—*Suprize* at first had depriv’d her of all those necessary Cautions she wou’d else have made use of; and now *Love*! Transported, raptur’d *Love*! wou’d not suffer her to have recourse to them—Trembling and panting, ‘twixt Desire and Fear, at last she lay resistless in his Arms, with faultering Accents confess’d a mutual Ardour. (119)

Her inexperience and sincerity render her extremely unprepared. She is unable to resist her own response to de l’Amye, and she lacks the sophistication to pretend otherwise. Disarmed by surprise, all of her good intentions are useless. The narrator begs readers to understand how helpless Lasselia is and to excuse her consent:

> I doubt not but this early Condescension in *Lasselia*, will be of so great Prejudice to her Character, that it will take off the Pity which is really due to the Misfortunes it brought on her; and I have nothing to alledge in her Behalf, but that the long Suppression of a Passion which she had always consider’d as fruitless, now on a sudden let loose, was beyond the Power of Reason to restrain. (119)

It is interesting that in this case Haywood does not limit uncontrollable feeling to women. Men, if they do not suffer the same internal war, are still susceptible to the same controlling god and are as helpless to resist. De l'Amye is the "votary" Eros directs. Thus, Haywood represents both men and women as guilty for their sexual transgression. Their crime is an equal one, as it would be in a religious context.

Admittedly, de l'Ayme is a singular male figure for Haywood. His sincerity sets him apart and to some extend vindicates Lasselia's preference for him. When de l'Amye settles Lasselia at the inn, the narrator suggests that Lasselia is foolish for trusting him:

> *Love* is ever credulous, and inspires so good an Opinion of the darling Object, that it is not without great Difficulty the Heart which harbours it, can be brought to believe any thing to the prejudice of what it wishes, even where there is the greatest ground for Suspicion . . . the little Knowledge she had of the Principles of *de l'Amye*, was but too reasonable a Cause for Doubt, that when he had nothing more to obtain, he might retain as little Regard for the Person who so generously gave him all, as his Sex ordinarily do—it was but by Chance whether by putting herself under his Protection, she shou'd not fall into the most miserable Circumstance to which a fond believing Woman can possibly be subject'd; and in such a Venture there were ten thousand Blanks to one Prize. (129)

Because de l'Amye is the one extraordinary exception, the narrator intrudes to remind readers that this story might well have proceeded differently. Haywood's men typically lose interest in a woman once they obtain her, and Haywood's pessimistic assessment is that a reader is far more likely to meet with that kind of man. But de l'Amye, though a man, *is* equally capable of great passion. "In the whole Course of his long Amour with her, she had it not in her power to accuse him of having told her one Untruth," the narrator explains, "To the End of his Life he lov'd her with an undimish'd Ardour—was too strictly careful of her Reputation, while there was a Possibility of preserving it—zealous for her Interest, and ever eager for her Love—Such a Ruin (as by the nicely

Virtuous, the sacrifice she made him of her Honour could be call'd other) was too pleasing to permit her to repent it" (129-30). The narrator obviously disapproves of the "nicely Virtuous" who would call Lasselia's heroic "sacrifice" her "ruin." Instead, "sacrifice" implies a generous and heroic gesture, or a religious one. Her pleasing ruin is a paradox, but it suggests that the sublime experience of love cannot be explained by conventional terms. She also draws a line between the "nicely virtuous" whose prejudices enforce the rules, and the greater souls of Lasselia and de l'Ayme that transcend those rules. Thus Haywood's exposition of sexual transgression is an apology for it.

Nonetheless, Haywood is not unaware that a more prudent man might have refrained from destroying Lasselia's life. She somewhat clumsily inserts de l'Ayme's backstory in "The History of the Two Mademoiselles Douxmouries" (131-42). This story reveals that De l'Ayme had a mistress as a young man who was also ruined and disgraced. Jerry C. Beasley maintains that this tale shows "the perils to which virginal innocence is vulnerable, even from a man of some real moral character, in a corrupt and perverse world" ("Introduction" xxxi). It also serves to exculpate Lasselia further for the crime of adultery: de l'Ayme should know better, but gives way to passion a second time.

Although De l'Ayme is a sympathetic character, his good qualities pale in comparison to Lasselia's excellence. When they are surprised at the inn by de l'Amye's wife and Lasselia's friends, Lasselia immediately grabs her lover's sword to kill herself. He disarms her, but Lasselia's penitent gesture moves them all and marks her as the noble heroine of a she-tragedy. Even the betrayed wife pities Lasselia. Madame de l'Ayme "had a great deal of Good-Nature, and so manifest a Proof of her Rival's Penitence and Despair, wrought on her so far, as to engage her Pity—and she thought, if that wou'd

make her easy, she could forgive the Wrong she had done her, provided she wou'd never more repeat it" (148). Lasselia demonstrates remorse and suffering, and the offended wife offers her forgiveness. It is a solution that Christianity had offered in a more religious age, and it is the same solution that Calista laments is not enough for earthly justice. Haywood, however, rejects the overly punitive demands of bourgeois expectations: unlike Calista, Lasselia will not die.

In fact, the gravity of the crime of adultery seems denied by the rather peaceful ending. Lasselia's friends persuade de l'Amye to give up Lasselia and return to his wife, and his feelings of gratitude to his wife make him agree to return to his marriage. Although de l'Amye never stops loving Lasselia, "yet the Temper of his Wife, who, after this, took double Care to make herself agreeable to him, by degrees, made him grow more chearful." (149). Perhaps his marriage has even been strengthened by this affair. In any case, social turmoil has been avoided. Lasselia, persuaded to live, joins a convent and experiences a purifying transformation: "*Lasselia*, who, as she had promis'd went directly to a Convent, strengthen'd by the good Advice of Madamoiselle de *Valier*, who frequently visited her, and the religious Conversation of the holy Maids she was among, in time was weaned from those sensual Delights she had before too much indulg'd herself in, and became an Example of Piety even to those who never had swerv'd from it" (149). Not only is Lasselia not permanently or irrevocably sullied by her transgression, she actually becomes a far better person morally. In fact, Lasselia's "excellence" at the beginning and end of her tale seems to be her capacity for higher spiritual elevation, first in passion, and then in holy conversation. Certainly one does not preclude the other. While the device of the convent serves different ends for Haywood, here it is a

community of women that provides a solution to the fallen woman's dilemma. Their "religious Conversation" brings Lasselia back to earth, and rehabilitates her into a better woman. Lasselia's *nachleben* shows that Haywood wanted to create places—if only imaginary ones—where fallen women could be redeemed from error and live. In *Lasselia*, Haywood attacks the double standard and the she-tragedy ethic of personal guilt. Lasselia and her lover are equally guilty, and yet they are both capable of reform and moral improvement.

Evil Fortune: *Idalia*

Haywood's second three-volume novel, *Idalia; or, the Unfortunate Mistress* (1723) was printed in two parts, with wide margins, large print and several elegant woodcuts depicting foreign lands. It is clearly intended as a fashionable entertainment. It may also be intended to compete with Penelope Aubin's tales, which feature kidnapping, shipwrecks, Barbary pirates, harems and a beneficent Christian Providence. *Idalia* confounds genre, comprising elements of seventeenth-century romance, southern European revenge tales, and she-tragedy. This fallen woman story takes place in a more religious universe, where the problem of illicit sex is sin rather than a threat to the bourgeois family. Like *Lasselia*, this novel shows the limits of personal responsibility and rational self-control, especially for women who do not have control over their circumstances. The story concerns Idalia, the incomparable daughter of a Venetian nobleman who endures relentless sexual attacks only to become what she works the whole novel to avoid becoming: a mistress. Her ruin occurs when another aristocrat, Don Ferdinand, tricks her into spending the night in his house and rapes her. Fearing her father, Ferdinand bundles her up and ships her to a house outside Venice, where she is

imprisoned by his friend Henriquez. The plot thickens when Henriquez apparently falls in love with Idalia and challenges Ferdinand to a duel; they are both killed. Idalia then falls to the hands of Henriquez's brother, Myrtano. Idalia and Myrtano fall in love at first sight. But Idalia suspects Myrtano only plans to make her his mistress. Rejecting the further loss of her status and reputation, Idalia flees on foot to join a convent. Her escape is complicated by an assassin who also falls in love with her, the attempted rape by a ship's captain, her rescue by Algerian pirates and an attack by banditti who rob her of everything she has left. Finally, dressed as a man, Idalia is rescued by Myrtano's wife, who has fallen in love with the young man she pretends to be. Myrtano discovers her, desire conquers virtue, and Idalia finally becomes his mistress. As she also becomes infamous, men treat her like a prostitute, which drives her to desire vengeance. Seeing the man who originally plotted her ruin in Venice, she rushes out to the street and stabs him, only to discover that the man is not whom she had thought, but Myrtano. In despair, she stabs herself.

Of the four fallen women evaluated here, Idalia is the least sympathetic. Like other romance heroines, Idalia is superlatively beautiful, refined, accomplished, and witty. At times, she carefully adheres to aristocratic manners; when Ferdinand asks her to hear him out, for example, she agrees because of the respect she owes his "quality." At other times though, she displays both vanity and fierce jealousy, and she is not cured of her faults as the story progresses. Her vanity makes her a coquette, greedy of collecting "conquests." A coquette is analogous to a libertine in that she uses her sexual appeal to exercise power over others. The beginning of the novel, in which Idalia enjoys the attentions of many admirers, is tragically mirrored at the end, when various men solicit

her for a mistress. When her father forbids her the correspondence of Florez, a socially inferior courtier, Idalia disobeys him because she is loath to lose even one devoted lover. She plans an assignation with Florez and finds that she has put herself into the power of Ferdinand. Although the narrator explains Idalia's vanity and willfulness as an effect of her father's injudicious indulgence, Idalia's "contempt" of her father's wishes is a serious character flaw, even in a fourteen-year old girl (I: 5).

Nonetheless, the narrator does not seem to view Idalia as thoroughly bad. The narrator refuses to condemn her:

> We hear, indeed, daily Complaints of the cruelty of Fate, but if we examine the Source, we shall find almost all the Woes we languish under are self-caus'd; and that either to pursue the Gratification of some unruly Passion, or fly the Performance of an incumbent Duty, those Misfortunes which so fill the World derive their Being: and would more justly merit Condemnation than Compassion, were not the Fault too universal. (I: 1-2)

Thus, the narrator both blames Idalia and insists she deserves compassion, since her faults are no different than any other's. The narrator sees all of humanity as flawed and full of error, a view that is consistent with a religious view that mankind is fallen and susceptible to temptation—men and women alike.

The narrator also acknowledges, despite the previous assertion, some things *are* completely beyond Idalia's control. Idalia is destined for misery because she is extraordinarily beautiful and men pursue her ruthlessly. Her beauty is a trait that seems to exercise a malevolent influence on others, creating social upheaval. After Ferdinand and Henriquez kill each other, the narrator comments: "The untimely Death of these unhappy Gentlemen gave Idalia the first Proof, that her Beauty, like a fatal Comet, was destructive to all on whom it had any influence, and seem'd given her in so extraordinary a

Proportion, only to make her Misfortunes more conspicuous" (I: 46). Attributing Idalia's tragedy to the demonic force of her beauty accomplishes two directly contradictory things and reveals a deep cultural ambivalence about sexual violence. On the one hand, the magical power of her beauty mystifies the real source of her suffering: men who rape, kidnap and confine her. In a sense her destructive beauty is a way to blame the victim for tempting the rapist. On the other hand, since Idalia's physical beauty is not something she asked for or is able to discard, she is simultaneously absolved of blame.

The supernatural is especially important in this story. It appears Idalia has been singled out for punishment by evil forces. When she realizes Ferdinand will rape her, she "begg'd of Heaven to protect her Honour," but heaven does not protect her (I: 13). Instead, "her evil Genius watch'd this Point of Time, when every friendly Planet was oppress'd, and only raging Influences govern'd, to ruin her, at *once*, for ever" (I: 14). If Haywood means to elicit the eerie *frisson* characteristic of later gothic fiction, she succeeds. The evil force reappears in volume III, when "her ill Genius had prevailed so far over her good one . . . to prolong her Life, to experience more misery" (80). Her "ill Genius" torments her, but she also commits the error of cursing herself:

> I call just Heaven, and every Saint to witness, I never will consent to see, or hear [Myrtano] more. —Too much already have I listened to his perjured Vows—which, when I do again, may all the Plagues of Earth and Hell fall on me. —May I be ruin'd, then thrown off to scorn—driven round the World with no Companion but my Infamy, and not one Friend to pity, or relieve me, till some unlook'd for, horrid kind of Death o'ertakes me, and sinks my Soul, with all its load of Guilt, beyond the reach of Mercy. (I: 72)

When Idalia is later reunited with Myrtano, she succumbs to desire and violates her vow, which seems to have the magical power of a deal with the devil, since her curse comes true. What are we to make of the magical power of the curse? Referring to curses made in

Richardson's *Clarissa*, Peter Hynes notes that curses are attempts to "control the world by predicting or even creating the future" (311). Is Idalia's fault her attempt to control her future? In other words, is Haywood suggesting that the absolute self-control prized by bourgeois ideology is a kind of denial of divine will? Perhaps not, but the effectiveness of the curse at least testifies to the reality of supernatural forces that operate on human life.

In only one place is Idalia specifically saved by a benevolent Providence. When the ship's captain threatens her with rape, "Heaven, by the most unexpected Means, sent her a Deliverance" in the form of the Barbary pirate Abdomar, who rescues her (II: 22). But why did heaven not save her from Ferdinand when she prayed for help? Heaven's wishes are difficult to discern. The shipwreck convinces Abdomar and his mistress, Bellaraiza, that "Heaven denied its Approbation of our Love" (130). They convert to Christianity and do penance by separating and taking orders. But could they not have seen heaven's approbation in their deliverance from death? Earlier, when Henriquez dies to avenge Idalia, his jealous fiancée "look'd upon [his death] as inflicted on him by the Justice of Providence for his Ingratitude and Perfidiousness to her" (I: 41). The narrator notes that this is only her view, showing she is wrong. Haywood suggests that human beings may erroneously attribute events to a Providence that is, in fact, mysterious and perhaps even unjust.

The presence of inscrutable supernatural forces in *Idalia* certainly complicates the middle-class belief in the efficacy of merit, industry, and self-discipline, and the Puritan belief in a benevolent Providence's reward for such virtues. In his study of working-class chapbooks from the early nineteenth century, Gary Kelley has found that working-class narratives are different from their middle class counterparts in their belief in a "lottery

mentality": a view of the world as ruled by "fortune and fate, chance and opportunity" (217; 212). Since the working-class had no control over their personal circumstances, their lives seemed dependent on luck. He explains, "In a sustenance economy life seemed a lottery, with little prospect of improvement except through luck or magic" (216). One way to understand the presence of the supernatural in Haywood's novels is that women, like the poor, see their circumstances as beyond their control. The most material circumstance women had no control over was their own sustenance. The growth of capitalism had robbed many women of any means of making a living. Relegated to the unpaid labor of the home, most women were completely dependent on their fathers and husbands for financial support. A father's death or a husband's gambling might suddenly make a woman destitute. Numerous eighteenth-century women authors and their fictional heroines testify to the terror experienced by a suddenly impoverished woman who must somehow provide for herself. In an economy that disallowed women paid labor, their personal merit or industriousness was irrelevant. To them, life must have seemed to be dependent on fortune.

Although the narrator does tend to attribute Idalia's misfortunes to fate and chance, the event that sets her sad story in motion is Ferdinand's assault. A violent rape like this seems totally out of place in a romance world. In seventeenth-century romances, and in Penelope Aubin's tales, heroines are besieged with rape attempts. But they always survive with their virginity intact. The violent rape that, at the very beginning of this story, robs Idalia of a heroine's chastity is a baffling anomaly. Idalia herself does not seem to realize the significance of it. Realizing that first Henriquez, and then Myrtano, love her, she convinces herself that she can mend her fortune by marrying one of them.

Yet she is in an impossible situation. In the aristocratic world of romance, she would never have lost her virginity. In the bourgeois world of the novel, she cannot marry without it. Haywood specifically avoids offering Idalia this possibility; although Myrtano wants to marry her, he cannot, and although the unknown stranger wants to marry her, he is killed before he can even offer. The possibility of marriage exists, but Haywood refuses to allow it, perhaps because her sense of realism prevents her. Instead, Idalia voices the despair of the tragic heroine of the bourgeois tragedy: "Can my polluted Honour e'er be cleansed from this vile Stain it bears?—Can I again appear a Virgin?" (II: 9). The answer is no. Haywood does not believe that marriage is possible for her. So Idalia's story ends where the fallen women stories usually do: in prostitution.

Idalia is an extremely pessimistic and dark tale. Readers perhaps felt moved by the numerous opportunities to sympathize with Idalia and shed tears over her suffering, as theater goers apparently liked to do when watching a woman brought to her doom on stage. But Idalia would also have confronted them with the injustice of the double standard and the possibility that women have less control over their lives—and their bodily security—than strict moral dictates allow. *Idalia* certainly presents a bleak picture of the life of a fallen woman who suffers more than her mistakes deserve.

A Man's World: *The Rash Resolve*

The Rash Resolve; or, The Untimely Discovery (1724) situates the fallen woman story within a larger context than irresistible passion or bad luck. The unraveling of this heroine's destiny is connected to wealth and power, and her downfall begins with the illegal seizure of her fortune by a male guardian. The protagonist, Emanuella, is orphaned in Puerto Rico and her father's fortune given to a corrupt guardian, Don Pedro, who

attempts to force her to marry his son, Don Marco. This son helps Emanuella escape to Spain where she litigates to regain her fortune. She wins, and as she awaits the return of her fortune she meets a young Italian nobleman, Emilius. They begin a love affair based on the premise that they will marry as soon as her fortune arrives. But her inheritance is lost at sea, and Emanuella, feeling unworthy of Emilius, joins a convent so she can punish herself for her sexual transgression. When she realizes she is pregnant, she leaves the convent and, after giving birth to a son, takes a menial job to support herself. Her misery is eventually relieved by the kindness of a woman who befriends her and takes her in. The story concludes when Emilius and his wife discover her and the child; Emmanuella mysteriously dies of a broken heart.

The narrative shows that Emanuella's downfall is not simply a personal error but the fault of female powerlessness in society. As an orphan, Emanuella is robbed of male protection. Her father has apparently failed to appoint a worthy guardian, and she becomes the victim of the tyrannical Don Pedro, who imprisons her. She is saved by Don Marco, but even when she escapes she is not assured of her rights. A courtroom scene shows how little Emanuella can expect from male judges. She appears before the Spanish royal court to make her claim. Emanuella rises to speak for herself and she is extraordinary; she defends herself "with a Courage infinitely beyond what could be expected from her Sex and Years; and wholly relying on the Justice of her Cause, and the Care of Heaven" (29). At first the royal court is quickly won "to her interest," and even the King becomes suspicious of Pedro's assertions that her father owed him money (30). But Don Pedro quickly attacks Emanuella's virtue, arguing that she seduced his son and wasted her inheritance by living "riotously" with him. With this argument Pedro turns the

court against her and she is about to lose the case. Marco attempts to defend her; he steps forward and affirms all she has said. Marco's intervention has an unintended effect on the King, however: "the King had been so much prepossest by Don *Pedro* of a criminal Correspondence between him and that Lady, that all he said appeared but as the Effects of Gallantry to save a *Mistress*, who, considering her Attractions . . . it was no wonder he should risque every thing for" (34). Marco fails to convince the king because, once Emanuella has been accused of sexual transgression, her testimony is suspect. At this point a shocking reversal occurs: Marco, "resolv'd to give a fatal Proof of his Sincerity," falls on his Sword, insisting on Emanuella's great worth (35). Ironically, Marco repeats the action of the Roman matron Lucrece, who, in order to prove the truth of her accusations against Tarquin, plunges a dagger into her breast. Lucrece knew that the testimony of women in any case of rape or seduction is assumed to be false and it is only through such dramatic action a woman might convince men she is telling the truth. Marco's action provides the novel with a dramatic she-tragedy scene with a man in the role of heroine. The shocking gender reversal calls attention to the expectations of the she-tragedy that so easily accepts the death of an innocent woman. Marco's needless death also shows how little Emanuela can expect from the court. She regains her rights only when Pedro falls apart after his son's death and confesses the truth. It is Pedro's testimony that decides the case, not hers. In a romance, the heroine's intrinsic virtue is immediately recognized. Haywood shows that men are far more ready to believe a woman sexually suspect or that they may be unable to recognize a virtuous woman. Thus, she sets her story in a world where a woman cannot obtain justice.

Emanuella's fallen woman story follows this astonishing opening. Renowned for her beauty and fortune, she is pursued by Emilius. Haywood emphasizes Emilius's worldly experience: "a perfect Knowledge of his own Attractions, and frequent Experience how little it was in the power of any Woman to withstand the influence of them" made him certain of succeeding with Emanuella (42). And Emilius's experience is contrasted with Emanuella's inexperience: Emilius's letters are written in such a way that she is convinced his intentions to her are honorable (42). Their first secret conversation gives them different impressions: Emanuella "was flattering herself with the Idea of a world of Satisfaction in the Proof of his Sincerity; and he, on the other side, was no less transported, that she seem'd willing to be assured he really was what he pretended" (48). The narrator even directly cautions readers to question Emanuella's credulity: "Whether *Emilius* was really possess'd of all those Qualities which go to the making up a perfect Lover, the Reader will be able to determine, when his future Behaviour shall be related" (51). If Emanuella errs in indulging him, she is also the victim of his dishonesty. The narrator intervenes to call attention to Emanuela's naïve idealization of her lover. The narrator also questions whether a marriage to Emilius is even in her own interest:

> As prodigious a share, as all who knew her acknowledged her to have of Wit, she saw not that these were common Arts, which those, least capable of Passion, make use of whenever excited, either by Interest, or Vanity; and that both these Inducements tended powerfully to draw an Attempt of this kind on her, she might have known, had she considered how much the Reputation of having a vast Fortune would gratify the one, and her well-known, and universally admired Perfections the other. (53)

Although the she-tragedy viewed a woman's fall as a result of her own moral failure, in both *The Rash Resolve* and *The British Recluse*, Haywood makes the heroine's ignorance the cause of her downfall. As Patricia Spacks notes, numerous writers argued

that women need more education (30). The absolute innocence that parents cultivated in their daughters in order to ensure their sexual chastity only made women defenseless. Without knowledge of men and a clear understanding of their position on the marriage market, women were dangerously exposed. Rowe's analysis of Calista's predicament, in contrast, does not blame a faulty education, but only her own foolishness.

Emanuella, despite her great virtue, falls victim to the power of passion, but her fault is mitigated by Emilus's promise of marriage:

> Their mutual Vows . . . and her firm Resolution to marry him as soon as this Affair was settled, gave, as it were, a Sanction to much greater Freedoms than otherwise he would have dar'd to have taken, or she wou'd have permitted, and at last . . . from one Liberty they ventur'd on another, till rapacious, greedy Love, too conscious of his Power, encroached on all, and nothing left for Honour. (56)

Their vows—which in England could be understood as a binding contract—remind readers of the courtroom scene. Emauella's sexual submission is dependent on this quasi-legal contract, and we have to ask if her rights will be honored and whether she will achieve justice.

Emanuella's sexual transgression leads to her *mis-fortune* when her inheritance is lost at sea. Haywood understands that even the most exceptional woman cannot hope to marry without money. Knowing that "it would never be in her power to make him any other Present than herself," Emanuella resolves to release Emilius from his vow to marry her. Her letter falls into the hand of a jealous rival, Berillia, who informs Emilius instead that Emanuella has taken another lover. Berillia then tells Emanuella that Emilius quickly renounced her when he learned she had lost her fortune. Although that is not true, Haywood hints that it might as well be. Emilius is shocked by Berilla's charges against Emanuella, but he does not pursue his inclination to seek an explanation from her: "the

Consideration, that if she was not guilty in the manner she was accused, yet that the Ship in which her Effects were, was lost, was past all doubt; and that to a young Nobleman, full of Ambition, and the Love of Grandeur, was sufficient to abate the Vigor of his other Passion: Beside, he had already enjoy'd her; and where is the Man who dies for a repeated Possession?" (67). In all, Emilius shows himself to be a weak character, who, though he seems to care for Emanuella, counts himself lucky to be free of her. His callous nature is confirmed when he immediately courts another woman who still has her fortune, and marries her soon afterward. He is not Lothario, but neither is he the saintly Altamont, who offers to take Calista even after her loss of chastity.

In contrast to the conventions of the she-tragedy, Emanuella's life does not end with the exposure of her transgression. First, Emanuella secludes herself in a convent where she intends to punish herself for her "Condescension to Emilius" (66). Haywood gives us the "too melancholy" account of how Emanuella beats herself in the convent, demonstrating Emanuella's remorse and eliciting the readers' pity (87). Emanuella's self-abuse must end, however, when she discovers she is pregnant. She leaves the convent and gives birth to a son. She lowers herself to work as a convent servant, but despite the humiliation of poverty she experiences the joy of motherhood. The narrator suggests that readers will think Emanuella hated the child that brought her further misery (95). On the contrary, "All the Ignominy which this Adventure, if divulg'd, would bring upon her, was now no longer a concern to her—Even Virtue was become less dear; and she could scarce repent she had been guilty of a breach of it, so much she priz'd the Effect" (96). Emanuella realizes she has a new life as a mother. The fallen woman's unmitigated suffering is thus mitigated by the joy of motherhood.

Emanuella is also rewarded by the friendship of supportive women. When the last of her money is stolen, her situation seems hopeless, but she is befriended by a wealthy woman, Donna Jacinta. Jacinta invites Emanuella to become her governess, but they quickly become friends and companions. Forsaken by her rightful husband, Emilius, Emanuella experiences a true marriage with Jacinta: "She had no reason to imagine she should not live and die with this kind Friend" (114). Catherine Ingrassia has suggested that this "marriage" may indicate a sexual relationship between the women as well, and Haywood's ambiguous language makes this a real possibility ("Sapphic Desire" 245). In any case, Jacinta provides Emanuela with a kind of justice for Emilius's broken vows in a substitute "marriage." She also proves Emanuella to be quite wrong in viewing the "present" of herself as an unworthy one. Donna Jacinta, unlike Emilius, requires no fortune in order to love Emanuella. This ideal female "marriage" illustrates the failure of heterosexual arrangements.

The ladies' solitude is interrupted, however, when a couple passing by sees Emanuella's child. They are Emilius and Julia, struck by the child's resemblance to Emilius. In the resolution to the novel, Emanuella is prized and defended by the two women while Emilius stands by passively. First, Berillia's treachery is revealed, and Emanuella's fidelity to Emilius proved by the son who resembles him. Emilius is stupefied by the revelations, but his wife Julia acts as righteous judge. She tells Emanuella,

> had I been appriz'd of the Right you had in him, I would have chose to fall a Martyr to Despair, rather than by gratifying my Desires have been guilty of so much Injustice . . . *Emilius* first was yours,—is still yours, by all those Ties which ought to bind an honest Mind; and if you can forgive the Crime he has been betray'd to act, I here resign him, and with him, the Title I have innocently so long usurp'd. (124).

In this extraordinary speech, Julia provides the justice which Emilius and society has denied Emanuella. The earlier courtroom scene, dominated by men, has been replaced by a court of women. Julia restores Emanuella's "right" to Emilius, making Emanuella, in essence, his wife. Whatever the law might decide, the facts are obvious to an "honest Mind." Emilius's failure to "do the right thing" is here corrected by another woman, who exchanges him with Emanuella just as he had exchanged Emanuella for her.

Emanuella declines Julia's offer, explaining that "When, by the Loss of my Fortune I thought myself unworthy his Bed, I relinquished all the Right his Vows had given me to him" (125). Julia then presses for the son's rights: "This lovely Infant . . . must ever be acknowledg'd as the just Heir of all his Father is possess'd of" (126). Julia's generosity does not end there. She also insists that Emanuella's son share in her fortune and that Emanuella live with her as a "Sister,—as a Friend" (126). Jacinta jealously protests and confirms the marital bond she and Emanuella share: "I had a friendship for *Emanuella*, before I knew who she was, and cannot consent to part with her . . . She must continue with me 'till Death inforces a Separation" (126). In a man's world, an impoverished unmarried mother has no power. In this woman's world, she is valued for her character and her rights are respected.

Haywood ends this strange contest between Jacinta and Julia with Emanuella's death. She is so overwhelmed by events that she dies of a "broken Heart" (127). Jacinta and Julia keep their promises to raise Emanuella's son, who inherits both their fortunes and his father's and who becomes the "greatest Ornament of the Kingdom which claims his Birth" (128). Although Emanuella dies pitifully, in a sense she becomes triumphant through her son. He claims the wealth and title that should have been hers as Emilius's

wife. In fact, her son is enriched too by Julia's and Jacinta's personal fortunes simply because they admire Emanuella. More than a simple defense of the fallen woman, *The Rash Resolve* is also an exercise in utopian fiction that suggests women can find happiness without men. As Ingrassia notes, Haywood "creates a world in which women's desires, authority and institutions determine the course of events" ("Sapphic Desire" 259). In this world, Emanuella is not condemned by a double standard that judges only her physical chastity, nor is her gullible ignorance a moral failing. Rather, Haywood gestures to the real causes of female suffering: inconstant men and women's powerlessness.

Predators and Prey: *The British Recluse*

The British Recluse; or, The Secret History of Cleomira, Supposed Dead (1722) is, like *Idalia*, a story of women victimized by predatory men. Specifically, in this story, one man victimizes a number of women, including Cleomira, the recluse of the title, and Belinda, another victim who becomes Cleomira's confidante. The two women meet each other at a boarding house where Cleomira lives in seclusion. Feeling an immediate sense of friendship, they agree to write out their personal histories and share them with each other. When they do, they discover they have both been in love with and traduced by the same man. They then agree to withdraw from the world together, living in the country in seclusion.

Although Rowe's Horatio claims that women should simply avoid duplicitous men, Haywood shows here that men are calculating deceivers and that ignorant and inexperienced young women are defenseless against their assaults. Once again, Haywood repositions the blame on a woman's faulty education rather than her moral character. Lord Bellamy, whom Cleomira calls Lysander and Belinda knew as Courtal, is a

calculating, aristocratic rake who toys with women for pleasure. This narrative is a severe critique of aristocratic privilege. (The good man of the story is a member of the gentry appropriately named "Worthly.") When Lsyander meets Cleomira, he knows how to manipulate her. Cleomira is young, inexperienced, unchaperoned and middle class; Lysander approaches her at a ball and pours on the charm. Cleomira notes that her first impression of Lysander was made more enticing by the way his behavior made her feel: "He was perfectly well bred, obliging and gallant . . . and what added to his other Engagements, at least *endeared* 'em to my (already doting) Heart was that, though he said nothing in particular to me at that Time, yet I could easily discern he aimed at pleasing only me" (164). An experienced libertine, Lysander knows how to make his aggression seem like a compliment. He later corners her and declares: "Pardon this Declaration: a vulgar Passion, and for a vulgar Object, may wait on the dull formalities of Decorum—but what I feel for you bursts out and blazes too fierce to be concealed" (165) His rhetoric persuades Cleomira to continue a conversation and later a correspondence that she knows is improper. In fact, when her mother learns they are exchanging letters, she does the proper thing and forbids her daughter to continue in it. Lysander manoevers to impede parental authority by inserting his agents, the Marvirs, in a neighboring house. The Marvirs act as messengers and arrange a rendez-vous. In his first physical attempt on her, Lysander forcefully embraces Cleomira in a garden. When she breaks free and reproaches him, he defends himself with oaths and vows. Cleomira is gullible enough to believe him. Looking back, Cleomira declares,

> Heaven! with what a counterfeited Vehemence has he exclaimed against the Inconstancy of his Sex!—With what an appearance of Sanctity and Truth has he invoked the Saints and Angels to be a Witness of his Vows! when, lavish of them, he has a thousand—thousand times protested that *Cleomira* should ever be more

> dear to him than Life! Oh record ‘em, all ye blessed Spirits! And in the last great Day, when I alone can hope for Justice, bring ‘em in dreadful Testimony against him and force his black, leprous Soul to own Conviction! (175-76)

Although Cleomira is inexperienced, her culture is one that values a man’s word. Spoken vows were considered binding enough to legitimate a marriage. Bellamy’s lies are so far beyond the pale that readers might very well sympathize with the believing Cleomira.

Lysander renders Cleomira dependent on him by separating her from her mother. He has the Marvirs persuade Cleomira to go to London and make Mr. Marvir her guardian so that her mother would have no control over her. Now Cleomira is completely under his control. Lysander suprises her in her bed and “gently forces” Cleomira to submit. Torn between what she should do and her love for Lysander, Cleomira gives a weak resistance. Cleomira says, “I *suffered*—or, rather let me say that I could *not resist* his proceeding from one Freedom to another” (178). Like all libertines, Lysander is bored once he succeeds. As their affair continues, Lysander eventually visits her less. She becomes pregnant and delivers a still-born child. When Cleomira returns to London, she learns that Lysander is carrying on an affair with a married woman. Later she discovers he is engaged to marry an heiress.

Belinda is similarly fooled by Courtal. Belinda is an orphan, but her dying father betrothed her to an upstanding neighbor, Mr. Worthly. Courtal insinuates himself between them and attempts to seduce Belinda in a wood. Worthly catches him and they duel. Belinda learns secondhand that Worthly is dead and Courtal fled to London. When Belinda follows Courtal, however, she cannot find anyone in London who knows him. One night at the theater she sees him in a box and her friends identify him as Lord

Bellamy. He is sitting with his wife and his mistress. Belinda even learns that in another incident he attempted to rape a woman in his carriage.

Lsyander/Courtal/Bellamy is ruthless, and his elaborate machinations are the stuff of fiction. But by emphasizing his predatory nature, especially his pursuit of middle-class women over whom he has social power, Haywood exculpates her seduced heroines. The blame is his, and Cleomira comes to recognize this. Her first instinct is to blame herself. Describing her resentment when her mother removes her from court to the country, Cleomira says "this sudden Change from all the Liberties in the World, to the most strict Confinement, is all the excuse I can make for my ill Conduct" (162). Cleomira seems to accept her guilt as a disobedient daughter, placing the blame on herself, as the double standard did. Yet she immediately wonders if this is true. She adds, "But why (continued she after a Pause) should I allege that for my Vindication, which Time, perhaps, and consideration might have made easy to me if a more fatal Enemy to my *Repose*, as well as my *Interest*, my *Honour*, and my *Virtue*, had not made it more hateful to me" (162-63). She realizes that her ruin was not inevitable, and that she might have grown out of her dislike of the country. She begins to understand the real cause of her misery: Lysander. His multiple names and multiple victims, even the unlikely coincidence of Cleomira and Belinda discovering each other, illustrates that his type is extremely common. Other women might commiserate over betrayals by other men, but, in a sense, they are all Lysanders.

In *The British Recluse*, Haywood also emphasizes the tragic difference between men and women. Her work abounds with inconstant men and tragically constant women. In her essay, "Reflections on the Various Effects of Love," Haywood distinguishes the

sexes: “A woman, where she loves, has no Reserve; she profusely gives her all, has not regard to any thing, but obliging the person she affects, and lavishes her whole Soul.—But man, more wisely, keeps a Part of his for other views, he has still an eye to interest and ambition” (115). In fact, as scientific thought developed theories of sexual difference, people came to believe that women’s brains were fundamentally different from men’s. Helen Thompson has shown that seventeenth-century treatises asserted that women’s softer brains were more vulnerable to accept strong and lasting impressions than men’s harder brains. Thus men may fall in love and recover, but women are permanently changed by the experience. “Feminine constancy,” she writes, “is a fatality which materializes as ruptured brain fibers” (126).

At the end of *The British Recluse*, Cleomira and Belinda both feel resentment towards Bellamy, but they still feel love for him. Belinda and Cleomira compare their experiences, “sometimes exclaiming against the *Vices*, sometimes praising the *Beauties* of their common Betrayer” (223). Belinda admits, “I confess I am weak enough to retain still in my Soul a secret Tenderness for that unworthy Man . . . Although I resolve never to see him more, I neither can forget or remember him as a Woman governed by Reason would do” (223). “Why are we not like Man,” Cleomira asks, “inconstant, changing and hunting after Pleasure in every Shape—Or, if our Sex, more pure, and more refined, disdains a Happiness so gross, why have we not the Strength of Reason too, to enable us to *scorn* what is no longer *worthy* our *Esteem*?” (160-61). Both women understand female sexual difference as one of the reasons for their misfortunes. Her observation about male sexuality applies even to the estimable Worthly: at first devoted to Belinda, he easily transfers his affection to her sister and marries her: “he found it no Difficulty to

transmit to her all the affection he had bourne her Sister" (224). Although the narrative contrasts Lysander the aristocratic libertine with the middle-class man of merit Worthly, it is nonetheless ambivalent about Worthly. He exchanges Belinda for her sister in marriage just as easily as Lsyander exchanged one woman for another in seduction.

Since Cleomelia and Belinda read each other's stories, they offer a model for the readers of amatory fiction. Cynthia Richards suggests that the two may read in the story of the other woman the annihilation of self, since their stories are identical (226). She suggests that the experience of seeing your likeness to another woman is usually painful. In Haywood's fiction, however, Richards argues that "The ability to recognize one's story in the story of another woman does function as a means to alleviate the isolation and even alienation that is often the fate of women" (232) I would argue, in addition, that the community of sympathy Haywood attempts to create among her female characters and her readers is one in which seeing your story in the other woman's is a way of understanding the underlying causes of your story. One woman's seduction is a unique misfortune, but the duplication of it suggests something else is at work. In other words, when Cleomelia and Belinda read each other's stories, they can realize that the real source of their pain is Bellamy, aristocratic privilege and libertinism. They can understand their predicaments as manifestations of a larger social problem. By analogy, the readers of Haywood's fiction might also be able to perceive the underlying causes for women's difficulties that are so often mystified as faulty personal judgment.

The British Recluse ends, figuratively, with a double marriage. Worthly marries Belinda's sister, and Cleomira and Belinda retire to live together in the country, "where they still live in perfect Tranquility, happy in the real Friendship of each other, despising

the uncertain *Pleasures* and free from all the *Hurries* and *Disquiets* which attend the Gaieties of the Town." Once again, where heterosexual union fails, female union succeeds. Haywood emphasizes the voluntary nature of their union: "And where a solitary Life is the effect of *Choice*, it certainly yields more solid Comfort than all the public Diversions which those who are the greatest Pursuers of them can find" (224). No two women can better understand each other than Cleomira and Belinda, and that mutual sympathy affords them a better life. Their mutual sympathy exposes the moral poverty of a world that automatically, simply and inflexibly blames women for their fall.

Conclusion

Penelope Aubin, one of Haywood's competitors, wrote adventure novels that featured virtuous women threatened with ravishment. Her heroines possess iron-clad virtue and prefer death to dishonor. The integrity of their virtue seems to be proved by their ability to escape or otherwise avoid rape. They even manage to convince their rapists to desist. In her "Preface to the Reader" for *The Strange Adventures or the Count de Vinevil and His Family* (1721), Aubin writes:

> I present this book to the public, in which you will find a story where Divine Providence manifests itself in every transaction, where virtue is tried with misfortunes, and rewarded with blessings. In fine, where men behave themselves like Christians, and women are really virtuous, and such as we ought to imitate.
>
> As for the truth of what this narrative contains, since Robinson Crusoe has been so well received, which is more improbable, I know no reason why this should be thought a fiction. I hope the world is not grown so abandoned to vice as to believe that there is no such ladies to be found, as would prefer death to infamy . . . (114-15)

The simple moral and Christian universe of Penelope Aubin's novels is far closer to that of the seventeenth-century romances than to the messier worlds of Defoe's or Haywood's female protagonists. Haywood had no such faith in the magical power of virtue to

conquer male lust. Her fallen women stories present women with more moral complexity and show them grappling with their own psychological weakness while they navigate a male-dominated world where they have little power. In a study of five women writers of the early eighteenth-century, Jean Kern found that in fallen women stories, only Penelope Aubin blamed women more than men for their fall. Haywood, in contrast, "judges men harshly" (463). Aubin's moral simplicity would be reaffirmed later by Samuel Richardson. Accepting that nothing can excuse a woman's fall, Pamela affirms "virtue is, and ought to be, preferable to all considerations, and to life itself" (II: 38). By "virtue," of course, she means sexual chastity.

Early in the century, however, Eliza Haywood fought for a larger understanding of women's circumstances. Her seduction stories complicate the issue of virtue as cultural conservatives promoted it. Paula Backscheider notes, "Haywood, [Aphra] Behn and many other women writers . . . manage to forbid the simple experiencing of their heroines as fallen women, sinners, criminals" (*Spectacular Politics* 140). Haywood's heroines live beyond their sexual transgression and seek alternative endings for the she-tragedy. If other novels tend to obscure the possibilities for seduced maidens, as Susan Staves suggests, Haywood actively pursues them. She resists participating in a literary culture that promotes the notion that a seduced maiden is irretrievably lost to society.

CHAPTER TWO
"THUS EVERY PART WAS FULL OF VICE": POLITICAL FICTIONS

In 1724, publisher Edmund Curll circulated the rumor that Delarivier Manley would publish a new volume of her scandalous satire, *Secret Memoirs and Manners of several Persons of Quality, of Both Sexes from the New Atalantis, an Island in the Mediteranean* (1709) (Needham 288). She did not. But Eliza Haywood wrote her own: *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* (1724-25). It was an homage to Manley, whose island kingdom Atalantis, representing England, neighbored a nation called Utopia. Haywood adapted Manley's concept, focusing on the South Sea Bubble as her age's political and moral crisis. Haywood's satirical targets are less obviously partisan than Manley's: she aims more generally at corruption and immorality, attacking the capitalist virtue of self-interest and her society's obsession with wealth. She shows that the integrity of the government and the justice system have been compromised by middle-class social climbers who claim to advance on personal merit when in fact they succeed through graft and bribes.

Amatory narratives fulfilled several goals for this kind of political fiction. Exposing politicians as lustful satyrs or as uxorious slaves to calculating mistresses had long served the ends of character assassination and discrediting government leadership. In England, amatory fiction could win other political points as well. In a nation still divided among jurors and non-jurors, Stuart loyalists and champions of the revolution settlement, seduction stories became allegories for uncertain political commitments. Jacobite writers understood themselves as victims of rape, Tories as complicit victims in their own seduction, and Whigs as the too-willing givers of consent to the powers

demanded by William III (Bowers, "Sex, Lies and Invisibility" 133; 149). The perils of female chastity became an analogy for the hazards of different political loyalties, and Haywood understood how to make use of amatory fiction to criticize England's politics. She also understood something else: England prided itself on the protection of the weak. A limited constitutional monarchy was supposed to protect individual citizens from tyranny. Part of the British Enlightenment's confidence in the progress of civilization rested on the premise that an advanced society despised tyranny and protected the rights of the weak. The most important measure of a society's progress was its treatment of women (Tomaselli). In the *Memoirs'* repeated portrayals of the exploitation of women, Haywood depicted a nation falling into savagery. Furthermore, Haywood grasped that the Bubble presaged a new economic order that did not respect tradition. The public feared that good families were ruined by ruthless stock-jobbers. Haywood translates financial "ruin" into stories of sexual "ruin." *Memoirs of a Certain Island* is peppered with amatory fictions in which an honest, worthy maiden is seduced by an unscrupulous man, only to be tossed aside when he decides to marry an unworthy heiress. Immoral, nouveau riche couples triumph over virtue in distress. These stories capture anxieties about the disintegration of traditional hierarchies in a heartless new economic order.

Sex, Politics, and the Woman Writer

After the Restoration of the English monarchy in 1660, a curious relationship developed between amatory fiction and politics. Writers wrote lascivious tales of seduction and adultery whose protagonists were kings, courtiers, and politicians. These "secret histories" purported to tell the unsavory truth about what went on behind closed doors. Sometimes secret histories claimed to reveal important state secrets. For instance,

The Perplex'd Prince (1682) divulges the story of Charles II's secret marriage to Lucy Walter, a marriage that would make the Duke of Monmouth the legitimate—and Protestant—heir to the throne. Secret histories could also function more simply as a form of character assassination. They expose the vice and luxury and especially the sexual immorality of the great in order to deny their fitness for power. The Roman Procopius first employed this tactic against Justinian in his *Anecdota* (c. 550 CE); this text was unknown in the West until 1623, when it was discovered in the Vatican library and published in Latin. It became extremely popular and, in the politically tumultuous years of the seventeenth century, incited a plethora of imitations (Mayer 95).

Many secret histories remain anonymous and we have to assume that most were written by men, as were most publications of any sort. But two women writers, Aphra Behn (1640?-1689) and Delarivier Manley (1670-1724), both Tories, distinguished themselves as authors in the genre. Both used amatory fiction extensively to show Whigs as godless libertines, seducing innocent maidens or cavorting adulterously with other men's wives. Aphra Behn chose an infamous seduction story for the subject of her book, *Love Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister* (1684-1687). The first volume is a fictional account of the real elopement of Ford Lord Grey of Warke (1655-1701) with his sister-in-law, Henrietta Berkeley (1664-1706?). Henrietta's father initiated court action against Grey after his daughter's disappearance, and Grey arranged a sham marriage between his mistress and his valet in order to remove her from her father's power (Greaves). The stranger-than-fiction romantic incident was undoubtedly too delicious for an imaginative writer to resist. But Grey's affair had further attractions for Behn as a political writer. Grey was a Monmouth supporter and conspirator in the Rye-House Plot,

and in 1683 he fled to the Netherlands with Henrietta and her mock husband to avoid arrest (Greaves). Behn's protagonist Philander is both Whig and libertine, and Behn shows that both are figures of moral failure and decadence: if a man can deny the power of king, he can deny the power of a father, the church, a wife. He cannot be trusted and will prove himself disloyal to any cause greater than his self-interest: Philander eventually betrays both his darling "Sylvia" and his prince Cesario, with whom he has plotted to overthrow the king. At the end of the third volume, Sylvia has descended into a life of debauchery, and Cesario, like Monmouth, has gone to the gallows. Philander, like Grey, confesses and earns a pardon that reinstates him into the good graces of the English court.

In secret histories, both Whigs and Tories attempted to show their opponents as lustful and base. But Tories had a rhetorical advantage; Whiggish philosophies of personal liberty that championed the social good of self-interest and attacked traditional forms of authority like the king and the church were easily married to the seducer's rhetoric. Philander claims unlimited personal freedom: his passion for Sylvia must not be denied by wife, father or the law. Thus, Behn fashioned the Whig as the destroyer of women and families, and, by extension, the country itself.

Delarivier Manley inherited Behn's mantle as Tory polemicist and secret historian. Her *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of both Sexes from the New Atalantis, an Island in the Mediteranean* (1709), known popularly as *The New Atalantis*, was "one of eighteenth-century Britain's most effective satires on Whiggish excess and hypocrisy" (Bowers, *Force or Fraud* 162). It was not a unified amatory fiction like Behn's, however. *The New Atalantis* uses an elaborate allegorical frame to

showcase corruption and decadence. The goddess Astrea, representing justice, returns to earth to gather information for the education of a prince. She immediately encounters her mother, Virtue, now in tatters. They journey to Atalantis's capital city Albion (London) where they meet Intelligence, who serves for the rest of the book as their guide to English vice. The text within this frame is an unruly collection of short fiction, salacious anecdote, satire, gossip, secret history, and even intellectual and moral debate (the goddesses discuss the problem of gambling, for instance).

Haywood's *Memoirs of a Secret Island* is rightly compared to *The New Atalantis*, and both books are sometimes incomprehensible to us because they defy our notions of genre. Ruth Herman suggests "*The New Atalantis*'s contents are so diverse as to defy categorization" (67). Aaron Santesso has argued, on the other hand, that *The New Atalantis* should be understood as what Manley claimed it to be in her preface to the second volume: Varronian satire. Although Varro's satires are lost, eighteenth-century scholars drew on references to Varro in other classical sources to characterize his work. According to Santesso, "The overall impression gained from . . . classical descriptions is of varied, elegant, and witty pieces which display their learning and which criticize luxury and modern decadence by contrasting them with traditional values and morals. This is the idea of 'Varronian' satire which would survive into the eighteenth-century" (180). Invoking Varro lends a certain dignity to Manley's hectic narrative and gives her inventory of vice a didactic purpose.

Varronian or not, *The New Atalantis* was a weapon of partisanship and Manley does not hesitate to use it for slander and character assassination. Most of the figures Manley satirizes are her opponents, the Whigs, although she does include some satirical

portraits of Tories. Some are well-known stories, such as the Duke of Portland's seduction of his niece, Stuarta Howard; some are blatantly fictional tales, such as that of Baron Haversham's incestuous children. Since many of the stories are obviously false, critics have categorized *The New Atalantis* as entertainment rather than political polemic. John Richetti minimizes Manley's political role, noting that while her attacks were "intended to serve political ends," the book mostly allows readers to "participate vicariously in an erotically exciting and glittering fantasy world of aristocratic corruption and promiscuity" (*Popular Fiction* 121). Richetti may overlook the political nature of her ad hominem attacks. Lies could serve the project of character assassination just as well as truths. Harold Love writes,

> Few things fall flatter than a satire written about people about whom nobody knows or cares. What is not so obvious is that even before the well-known people can be used effectively as butts of satire there have to be instantly recognizable signs by which they can be identified, and stock accusations against them that are universally known and accepted . . . the charges do not have to be true; indeed in order to satisfy the strange needs served by the genre it is often a good idea if they are not true, or no better than half-true. (23)

Thus, a satirist could invent a story that might even be known to be false; it could still be effective as a political weapon. The reception of *The New Atalantis* by Queen Anne's advisors illustrates this point. Arthur Maynwaring thought its gossip was nothing more than well-known and dated stories and therefore irrelevant. But Sarah Churchill understood the power of popular literature: making these satires popular could transform them from old news to a form of political propaganda, and she warned the queen about *The New Atalantis*'s effect on public opinion (Parsons 55-56).

An additional generic problem modern readers confront in *The New Atalantis* is the inclusion of seemingly stand-alone fictions that are not related to any real persons and

do not seem to serve the ends of political satire. Why did Manley include these? Rachel Carnell suggests that these stories are decoys for the censors meant to circumvent libel laws (*Political Biography* 173). Ruth Herman suspects, on the other hand, that the diversity of material in *The New Atalantis* served a commercial purpose to "sweeten the pill of pure political comment" and "attract those who might normally shun politically oriented texts" (70). Recently Toni Bowers has argued that the fictional stories included in *The New Atalantis* are simply an additional mode of voicing the same themes contained in the more topical political anecdotes. These tales use a "revised method for scoring partisan-ideological points: engendering readers' disgust less for specific persons than for Whiggish ideas" (*Force or Fraud* 180).

Bowers also argues that seduction stories like those Manley includes had a specific political function in the seventeenth and eighteenth century: as political matters frequently employed the language of seduction, they served as metaphors for the compromises made or imposed upon different factions by the Glorious Revolution. Manley belonged to the generation Bowers dubs "New Tory," a generation that uneasily accepted the Revolution Settlement. New Tories like George Berkeley refused to be drawn into arguments over hereditary succession and argued instead that loyalty and obedience was owing to the sovereign power established by the will of the people and the law. At the same time, New Tories had to distance themselves from Jacobitism. For Bowers, seduction stories in which a virtuous young woman resists and then capitulates represents New Tory anxieties about legitimate authority. She writes,

> this structural topos transfixed these authors' imaginations because it replicated what was, for them, an urgent problem: how (and how far) to resist the demands of authority figures—figures both dangerous and desirable, to whom submission,

> while due, was problematic or transgressive—without forfeiting Christian virtue. (*Force or Fraud* 23)

Thus, the inclusion of seduction stories, whether purely fictional or satirical, could strengthen the identity of Manley's work as ideologically Tory while amplifying the attack on Whig ideology. Haywood uses the same strategy in the purely fictional stories that she weaves into satirical portraits in *Memoirs*: embattled female virtue symbolizes embattled public virtue. Although *Memoirs* is unquestionably less partisan than *The New Atalantis*, Whig ideology remains a target.

Seduction stories also provided women writers with entry into political debate. Ros Ballaster proposes that Manley's use of female goddesses as commentators on allegorical seduction stories serves to empower the woman writer:

> Manley's use of allegorical 'frames' is but one aspect of a wider project in her scandal novels: the attempt to figure the possibility of female political agency through the allegorical use of the seduction plot as substitute for the political plot, Manley's repetitious tales of seduction can be seen as a series of attempts to destabilize the structuring oppositions of contemporary ideology (fact versus fiction, love versus politics, feminine versus masculine) in order to privilege the woman as commentator upon and actor in the political realm. (131)

Thus, one of Manley's most important contributions is that she insisted that women be part of the public political debates. Haywood, too, uses her power as a writer to represent women in political discourse.

Memoirs of a Certain Island

Eliza Haywood seemed to understand Manley's initiative. She extends Manley's legacy in her own political satire. *Memoirs of a Certain Island* is a Varronian satire obviously patterned on *The New Atalantis*. Haywood's deity, Cupid, gives a foreign traveller a guided tour of the island's vices. Like her predecessor Manley, Haywood

promotes her friends and ridicules her enemies, makes dozens of ad hominem attacks on private and public figures, and includes stand-alone amatory fictions that are apparently not meant to refer to actual persons. Haywood's relentless depiction of sexual crimes is formally justified by choosing Cupid as narrator: he explains that England has rejected the god of love and instead worships a demon of lust:

> the mistaken Wretches . . . idolize a *Fiend*!—'Tis true, the Demon has usurped my Name!—my Face!—my Voice!—they still revere and call on *Cupid,—Cupid* they still adore—But not a *Cupid* accompany'd with Innocence, Virtue, Constancy; but a *Cupid*, ushered in by wild Desires, Impatiencies, Perplexities, and whose ghastly Train are filled with Shame, Disgrace, Remorse, and late Repentence and Despair! Yet this is the Deity to whom they sacrifice—this is the God they invoke, and with *Pecunia* drives from their perverted Souls all Sentiments of Honour, Virtue, Truth or Gratitude. (I: 4-5)

Haywood's choice of a male god as narrator may appear to be a retreat from Manley's use of female narrators as political commentators. However, Cupid could serve as a symbol for Haywood herself, since, as a writer, she has played Cupid and slung the darts of love into her characters. A further consequence of using Cupid is that he serves as a contrast to the other god of love, Venus, who is more clearly associated with sex. In the popular legend of Cupid and Psyche, Cupid is a faithful *husband*. His honorable loyalty therefore serves as a contrast to the Whig fault of "ingratitude" that stems from self-interest.

Haywood's ubiquitous use of transgressive and even criminal sex in her ad hominem attacks has alienated readers. Alexander Pope found it repulsive and illustrated his point with a lewd portrait of Haywood in his poem *The Dunciad* (II: 136-145). According to George Whicher, the success of *Memoirs of a Certain Island* depended on "the spiciness of personal allusions" rather than literary merit (110). "None of the

skimmings of contemporary gossip," he authoritatively concludes, "deserves the least consideration" (106). For John Richetti, Haywood's "slavish imitation" of *The New Atalantis* fails because it lacks the interest of political polemic that sustained Manley's otherwise salacious tales (*Popular Fiction* 152-53). He writes, "Lacking a political point of view, the gossip that Mrs. Haywood repeated or invented or heightened tends to be sexual scandal for its own sake, gratuitously sensational" (*Popular Fiction* 156). It is tempting to attribute the reservations of Whicher and Richetti to their disdain for unmanly gossip, but even feminist scholars like Ros Ballaster echo their assessment:

> It is significant that, unlike Manley, Haywood did not indulge in any form of political journalism. She produced three novels that owe clear debts to the scandal fiction of Manley, even echoing the latter's famous title of the *New Atalantis*, but the seduction/betrayal motif was now exploited for the purposes of a more general moralism and Haywood betrays no interest in direct political intervention or allegiance to other opposition figures or forces. Haywood's targets in the two scandal novels of the 1720s are not leading politicians but court figures and private individuals. These novels show none of the 'insider's' knowledge that made Manley's work so threatening to the Whig politicians who brought her to trial and the stories are presented as moral exempla. (156)

Thus, modern scholars have not recognized *Memoirs* as a political satire. After all, satire depends on a reader's knowledge of its referents. Books like *Memoirs of a Certain Island* have a short shelf life, since readers are no longer familiar with the public figures involved. Haywood's key contains 199 entries; some 58 of these are untitled—private persons who are difficult to recognize today. Lords are easier to recognize, but sometimes it is still difficult to understand the reason Haywood maligns them. Certainly, a lot of Haywood's material seems like gossip over adulterous affairs, and Ballaster is right that Haywood evinces little insider knowledge. Thus, her political motives may seem unintelligible to us.

Haywood's aims, however, are clearly political. Whether or not she ever overtly adopts a political party, *Memoirs of a Certain Island* generally promotes the commitments of the Tory opposition. For instance, Haywood gives an ambivalent portrait of Lord Bolingbroke, a Tory who both saved and sinned against the party (II: 45-54). She also mocks the Jacobites in her portrait of the Earl of Derwentwater and his wife (I: 280-282). She accuses William III of sodomy (II: 111) but defends George I, "who, though a foreigner, was elected by the unanimous Voice of the Nobility and the Commonality, as well as that of the Senate" (II: 6).

In addition, Marta Kvande argues that Haywood uses an "outside narrator" to represent the position of disinterested civic virtue, a perspective used by opposition writers to attack the personal interest and corruption of Walpole's administration (626). Kvande writes, "The *Memoirs*' focus on personal (and especially sexual) relations has been used to claim that the novel is not political, but when we recognize that the very idea that 'personal morality [is] private rather than public' belongs to the ideology of the Court Whigs, we can see that to treat these novels as apolitical is, in fact, to subscribe to the very political viewpoint Haywood is attacking" (628). And, as did Behn and Manley, Haywood uses amatory fiction because "sexual crimes, in this setting, are tied to political and financial crimes because all are motivated by narrow self-interest—that is, by the desire to benefit oneself at the expense of others" (630).

Bernard Mandeville and Public Virtue

Indeed, Haywood's overall attack in *Memoirs* is an attack on the self-interest associated with the Whig administration. Tory writers had already established a stereotype of Whigs as undeserving social climbers. W. A. Speck writes that according to

this popular image, "The Whigs were upstarts who rose in the world by being totally unscrupulous" (*Literature and Society* 49). Prominent Whig Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733) praised such ambitious upstarts and managed to set off a lively public debate over self-interest and civic corruption when he published an expanded edition of his *Fable of the Bees* (1723). Mandeville's busy, productive hive is England: "They were not slaves to Tyranny, / Nor rul'd by wild Democracy; / But Kings, that could do no wrong, because / Their power was circumscrib'd by the Laws" (1). The hive thrives, despite crime, cheats in every profession, court and government corruption. "Thus every Part was full of Vice, / Yet the whole Mass a Paradise" because England is economically prosperous and militarily victorious (9). Vice and luxury fuel employment and trade. But the bees continue to complain about dishonesty until Jove finally grants their wish and fills them with honesty. The hive's new frugality and virtue causes its decline. The moral concludes:

> Then leave Complaints: Fools only strive
> (X.) To make a Great an Honest Hive
> (Y.) T'Enjoy the World's Conveniencies,
> Be fam'd in War, yet live in Ease,
> Without great Vice is yet a vain
> Eutopia seated in the Brain. (23)[1]

Mandeville's book is subtitled "private vices, public benefits." This would have been an oxymoron to political thinkers of the time, of either party. M.M. Goldsmith writes that:

> The dangers of vice and corruption and the value of virtue, public spirit, and liberty were common themes among Augustan moralists, satirists, and political pamphleteers. The controversialists combined two distinguishable types of thought. First, they drew upon a pattern of ideas which emphasized public virtue; it contrasted liberty, public spirit, and civic virtue with civic corruption . . . Thus, for Augustans, public virtue and private virtue were intimately connected; private

[1] The letters X and Y refer readers to an appendix where the issues of these lines are discussed.

> vices were not the sole concern of private men for they were causally linked with civic corruption. (479-480)

Both Whigs and Tories adopted this attitude; for example, Goldsmith notes how prominent members of both parties vyed to out-applaud each other at performances of Joseph Addison's play *Cato* (1712) (490).

Mandeville turns this notion upside-down by arguing that vice is good for society, and his subtitle may give us an additional clue for Haywood's choice of Cupid as narrator. Cupid's assertion that England mistakes lust for love invites us to wonder what other vices are being mistaken for virtues. Moreover, Cupid's complaint is a commonplace of classical literature that would have been familiar to her audience: For instance, Sallust's Cato says in *Catiline*, "But in very truth we have long since lost the true names for things. It is precisely because squandering the goods of others is called generosity, and recklessness in wrong doing is called courage, that the republic is reduced to extremities" (Cat. 52).[2] Mandeville's misuse of language obfuscates the danger of not understanding vice for what it is.

Although Mandeville was a Whig, his poem extolling vice was attacked from all sides. It incited "a barrage of invective from pulpit and press, a chorus of complaint which accompanied its publishing history throughout the rest of the eighteenth century" (Speck, "Bernard Mandeville" 362). Its author was recommended to the Court of the King's Bench for prosecution by the Middlesex Grand Jury. The Jury also included in its presentment selections from the *London Journal* written by radical Whig Sir John Trenchard (1649-1675) who had attacked the church and the trinity in an essay against

[2] I would like to thank Dr. Kevin Muse for pointing this out to me. I do not mean to suggest that Haywood was familiar with this specific text, but, rather, that it was a common theme in political discourse.

charity schools.[3] W.A. Speck has shown that these two prominent Whigs were perfect targets for the grand jury, comprised of several important Tories and country Whigs who united in the presentment to show both their support for the king and their opposition to Walpole's administration ("Bernard Mandeville" 367-68). Thus, we can see Haywood's "general moralism" in *Memoirs* as a political position in this debate.

This context also illuminates why Haywood chose to make England's first stock market crash, the South Sea Bubble of 1720, the organizing device in *Memoirs*. The Bubble's collapse was a colossal scandal of the Whig government that roused public fears about the changes brought about by the financial revolution of the late seventeenth century. Modern financial instruments like credit, banks, and joint-stock companies had changed English society, creating a "mercantile republic" that shifted power from landowners to city merchants (Carswell 2). The rise of new wealth and its corresponding influence in government naturally called into question more traditional forms of authority. The Bubble seemed to be the consequence of the new ambition for easy wealth that in turn threatened national prosperity. The Bubble also served as an important symbol of public and private corruption. The directors of the company, many of them in government or connected to it, mismanaged stock sales so that the company's share price rose spectacularly over the summer of 1720 only to fall just as precipitously in the autumn. Most of the investors were already wealthy, and historian Julian Hoppit estimates that the effects of the bubble were far more limited than they were represented ("Myths"). Regardless, the Bubble ignited the public's fears about economic change. The public also learned that the directors of the company had acted shamefully, protecting

[3] In my view, this may be the reason Haywood attacks Trenchard, even though he had been a vociferous critic of the government's handling of the Bubble.

themselves and their own money even when it hurt the company (Carswell 144-158). Politicians were so involved in the company and the subsequent scandal that "there was hardly an untainted politician left" (Carswell 192). Partisan differences were momentarily put aside when members of the House of Lords formed a united opposition to attack the ministry of the Earl of Sunderland (Jones). This event may account for what might be called Haywood's tepid partisanship; Haywood may be appealing to a mixed opposition by masking more specific political loyalties.

The Enchanted Well

In *Memoirs of a Certain Island*, Haywood figures the South Sea Company as an enchanted well. Cupid shows the traveller a desperate crowd, composed of all members of society, gazing into a deep well that is presided over by Fortune and Pecunia, the goddesses of luck and money, respectively. Cupid narrates multiple personal catastrophes caused by the well. Most of these stories concern middling families whose losses mean that they cannot provide dowries for their daughters or unencumbered estates for their sons. Some aristocrats, too, are humiliated by their losses. Members of the government, however, rise on mysteriously acquired fortunes.

A necromancer, "Lucitario," and his "creatures" persuaded the people of the Island that the well was the only way to wealth, and the foolishly dazzled populace all suffered when the bubble collapsed except "those who were privy to the Juggle, or whose Interest with *Lucitario* kept him from permitting they should be imposed on" (I: 9). Lucitario is the elder James Craggs (1657-1721), who was deeply involved in the South Sea company and whose guilt seemed proved when he committed suicide the night before he was to testify before Parliament. The well is a religious shrine, and Lucitario, a

magician. Although the spring was "in reality never any other than common Water," this necromancer "made [it] appear to the Eye like liquid Gold, flowing in Tides of Wealth to the Reciever's hand" (I: 7-8). Haywood's list of the ruined emphasizes how the well destroys old families and threatens future generations:

> Young *Spendthrifts*, who indulging themselves in the Vices of the Age, had revelled away the greatest part of what their careful Ancestors had saved, were wiling to risque the Residue in Offerings to these Shrines, in hope of having twice as much as they had spent restored.–Grave *Grandsires*, who had amass'd vast Heaps of Treasure, sufficient to have preserved them and their Posterity for many Generations from Want, gladly plunged it all into this magical *Well*, not doubting in the least but they should have Returns proportionable to the Value of the Sacrifice. (I: 8-9)

Everyone, foolish and wise, accepts the irrational promises made by Lucitario. At the end of volume I, another deity, the Genius of the Isle, destroys the well's magic and reveals the spring to be only "naked Mud, and long-drench'd reedy Ooze" (I: 285). The lesson is not learned, however. The greedy persist in their ambitions, especially the upstart politicians:

> . . . the Politician, who from a supplicating *Courtier* hoped to be made a *Count*; a Count, a *Marquis*; a Marquis, a *Duke*; and in the Expectations of future Grandeur had submitted to traffick as an humble Cit . . . hardened in his Crimes, he not repented those he had committed, but was already beginning to rack his inventive Brian by what new Stratagem he should arrive at those Honours he was so covetous of wearing, tho' unworthily. (I: 286-87)

The shocked Genius rebukes all the unrepentant islanders: "Degenerate Wretches, how have you lost that Sense of Honour you were once so fame'd for? . . . for gain you'll forgo your very Gods, betray your Prince and Country, prostitute your own Wives and Daughters, plunge a Dagger into the Breast of her that bore you, or him you have begot"

(I: 287-288). His speech rebukes them for traducing their history and for committing every kind of private vice for avarice and self-interest.

The interpenetration of public and private in virtue and vice is demonstrated in numerous stories where private morality is compromised by public vice. One example of this is the story of the "Duke de Ulto." Ulto is certainly meant to be John Montagu, second duke of Montagu (1690-1749) and the son-in-law of Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough (1660-1744). Ulto is drawn into the well and hopes to be "an immense gainer by it" (I: 115). He invites "Melanthus" to his house with the hopes of greater profits. Melanthus represents James Craggs, the younger (1686-1721), a politician implicated in the parliamentary investigation into the bubble. (He died of smallpox before he testified.) While he is Ulto's guest, Melanthus has an affair with the duke's wife. The story is true; Montague's wife did have an affair with Craggs, who was a famous womanizer (Field 369). For Haywood's purposes, the cuckolding of the duke results from his own avarice and his susceptibility to promises of wealth. Melanthus represents the worst of both sexual and financial opportunism. Incidentally, the duke's wife, Sarah Churchill's daughter Mary (1689-1751), is no prize, either. In Haywood's representation she loathes her husband and has already had many affairs. Sarah Churchill was a prominent Whig who profited from the South Sea Bubble. Thus, her daughter Mary is a convenient and tempting political target for Haywood.

Robert Walpole and his Administration

Scholars who recognize the political edge of *Memoirs* usually ascribe to Haywood an anti-Walpole position. Robert Walpole (1676-1745) came to power because of his adroit handling of the South Sea Crisis; his negotiations with the Bank of England and

the East India Company saved the South Sea Company from total disintegration and spared the economy worse after-shocks from the crisis. Although he would later become known for corruption and graft, he emerged from the Bubble as one of the only politicians who was not implicated in the scandal. At the end of volume I, Haywood includes a tableau of patriots, including Walpole, who is praised by the Island Genius. "Cleomenes"[4] is:

> That greatly noble *Patriot*, whose only Care, whose only Aim, is how to serve his Country, shows he despises all those sordid Views by which his Contemporaries are sway'd, looks down on Titles, and chuses to be great in worth alone.—The truly Meritorious ne'er sued to him in vain, nor did the Undeserving, tho' ne'er so near ally'd by Blood, meet advantage by his favour.—The humble Virtuous need but to be known, to be exalted high as his Interest can raise them, but the proud Vicious meet his utmost Scorn.—With him no Recommendations but intrinsick Goodness and known Abilities are of force—no secret Bribes, no Flatteries, no Insinuations, ever mov'd him to a forgetfulness of what he owes to Heaven, or to his Country. (I: 277-78)

Scholars have viewed this as ironic: these praises suggest the exact opposites of the corruptions he would later become famous for. Margaret Rose compares it to Dryden's *MacFlecknoe*, a "paradoxical encomium" (42) However, Kathryn King suggests that this portrait is not ironic: rather, the extravagant praise for Walpole is Haywood's play for patronage (*Political Biography*[5]). King's argument is strengthened by the scene: Cleomenes appears with other powerful men known to be generous patrons. Furthermore, Volume II closes with praise for the "Knights of Fame," glossed as "Knights of Bath" in the key; resuscitating this order was one of Walpole's projects.

[4] It is tempting to imagine that Haywood was thinking of the "Cleomenes" Mandeville used to defend his treatise in the dialogues following the *Fable of the Bees*.

[5]Because I have seen only the manuscript for this forthcoming book, I am unable to provide page numbers.

King's theory is convincing. As she argues, *Memoirs of a Certain Island* appears before Walpole gained his reputation for corruption, and writers did hope to secure patronage from the new first minister (*Political Biography*). However, I believe Haywood does attack Walpole in the figure Maltolius in volume II. While Cleomenes is glossed in the key and easily found by government censors or curious ministers, Maltolius is omitted from the key. Haywood may have intended to have her cake and eat it too by giving the ministry a reason to reward her while, at the same time, criticizing the very man she hoped to profit from. Because King views Haywood as soliciting Walpole's patronage, she views Maltolius as a fictional figure who represents corruption in general. However, Maltolius, "Head of the Senate," can be identified through the characterization of his wife. To punish Maltolius for abandoning his first wife, Cupid makes him fall madly in love with his new wife. But she, "disdainful of his Ardors, and a Libertine in Pleasure, profusely showers her Favours on as many as seem desirous of them" (II: 32). Haywood merely reproduces known gossip: Mrs. Walpole's affairs were "the talk of the town" (Taylor). "A Person strangely extravagant in his Dress and Manner of Behaviour," whom Cupid calls a "Thing" who is noted to be "both the Paramour of Man and Woman" is "now the chief Favourite of the Wife of Maltolius" (II: 38). Although this character is not glossed, he is probably Lord John Hervey (1696-1743), now recognized as bisexual and an important ally of Robert Walpole. Since the portrait of Maltolius occurs only in volume II, it is possible that Haywood did not turn against Walpole until later, perhaps because she thought him linked to the Chancery scandal.

The Chancery Scandal

If the Bubble is the focus of the first volume of *Memoirs,* the Chancery scandal highlights the second. The Lord Chancellor, Thomas Parker, first earl of Macclesfield (1667-1732), and, coincidentally, Bernard Mandeville's patron, was exposed in 1724-1725 for embezzling £60,000. In November 1724, Robert Walpole began an investigation into charges of court corruption, and, by May 1725, Parker had been disgraced by a parliamentary inquiry that found excessive graft in his office, including the Lord Chancellor's acceptance of bribes for the sale of offices and his misuse of suitor's money (Hanham). In *Memoirs*, Cupid finds "Sarpedon" counting a bag of gold (II: 25). Haywood notes the government's investigation:

> the Law took notice of it, and Judges were appointed to inspect into the Justice of Complaints which were daily made; as also by what means a Man, born of a Family obscure, and the inheritor of but a small portion of Land in a distant County, should in a few Years be the master of Possessions superior to most part of the Nobility. —Some Patriots this Island boasts, whose Scrutiny wou'd have unravell'd all, and brought the whole dark Scene of his unparallele'd Villainy to Light. (II: 25)

Referring to the bag of gold, Cupid explains that Walpole, "Maltolius," "is by this Bribe prevail'd upon to seal his Pardon . . . and makes himself a Partner in the other's Crimes" (II: 25). In fact, Walpole had no interest in saving Macclesfield, and probably hoped the trial would protect the ministry from additional charges of screening a corrupt colleague from justice (Hanham). Macclesfield was not pardoned, but imprisoned in the tower. Nonetheless, Haywood plays upon public suspicions by linking Walpole and Macclesfield. She clearly meant to discredit the administration.

The Chancery scandal serves Haywood well as an illustration of the perversion of

justice. A.A. Hanham reports,

> No fewer than twenty-one articles of impeachment were exhibited against Macclesfield by the House of Commons. He was portrayed as having a particular lust for wealth, and, despite generous rewards from the king, was said to have misused his office to amass further sums of money. It was alleged that he had sold vacant chancery masterships; received hefty bribes for agreeing to the sale and transfer of offices; and admitted to office several masters of insufficient financial means whom he had allowed to pay for their places out of suitors' money.

King adds:

> The rapacity of Macclesfield's greed coupled with his willingness to use the powers of his office to steal from widows and orphans provoked new outrage at every level of society. At least as much as the vastness of the sums was the fact that they had been set aside for the use of helpless members of society under the express protection of the Chancellor: women, infants, and lunatics. (*Political Biography*)

What could be a better example of the deterioration of British morals?

Haywood follows her account of the scandal with two amatory fictions in which Sarpedon preys on families who have been impoverished by the court. Specifically, he demands sex from wives and daughters only to renege on promises to restore their family estates. Both families are destroyed by his duplicity.

Meritorious Maidens and Betraying Lovers

In addition to tales of sexual depravity like Sarpendon's, Haywood writes a number of seduced maiden stories for *Memoirs* that serve as metaphors for the overthrow of the deserving by the avaricious. The seduction stories of *Memoirs of a Certain Island* reprise a common scenario: a virtuous, worthy maiden is seduced by a man whose personal ambition leads him to abandon her in order to make a more politic marriage to an unworthy woman who inevitably takes lovers. In this way, the worthy are pushed aside, the undeserving promoted and the bride's dowry stands in for the bribe. The wife's

penchant for adultery shows that relationships formed for money do not promote the sacred duties owed to "Heaven" or "Country."

The amatory fiction attached to Walpole in volume II is a typical example of Haywood's use of this allegory. Haywood writes that Maltolius abandoned his first wife for an heiress. As a young man, his lust for a virtuous young woman leads him to attempt seduction and even "force." But she insists on honorable marriage. To satisfy his passion, he marries her legally but secretly, claiming the secrecy was "absolutely necessary as his Affairs stood" (II: 28). The secret marriage is an apt metaphor, perhaps, for the secret deals that made Walpole notorious.[6] Maltolius's wife tolerates their secret marriage, even bearing two children, before she demands "that publick Justice which her Merits and his Honour requir'd him to pay her" (II: 29). Alarmed at news that his lawyer is drawing up a marriage settlement for his betrothal to another woman, she "conjur'd him to have some regard to his own Honour, to his Vows, and the solemn Contract he had made before the holy Altar" (II: 29). Merit, justice, honor, and vows, holy or contractual, do not concern him, however. Even his bride, "induc'd by other Motives than those of Love to marry *Maltolius*" is unruffled by the charge of bigamy. His wife, so impotent and obscure that Haywood never gives her a name, attempts to pursue her rights through the law. But the signatures on her marriage certificate, apparently written with disappearing ink, have vanished and "there now remain'd not the least tincture on the Parchment that any thing had ever been written there" (II: 31). Maltolius's legal chicanery is buttressed by her lawyer, who is already reluctant to take her case because of Maltolius's influence and power. He suggests that it was all in her head, that "She had but imagin'd such a Contract

[6] Although King may be right that Walpole was not yet famous for bribery, he was already famous for screening some of the South Sea directors from prosecution by the parliament.

had been made between them" (II: 31). Haywood elicits pity for the poor woman's plight: "It was in vain she protested that Desires had not deceiv'd her, that she was in reality his lawful wife" (II: 31). But "she had no evidences to testify to the truth of her Assertions, she knew not the priest who married them . . . To whom now could she complain?—from whom could she hope Redress? (II: 31). Maltolius's wife, despite her own worthiness, her marital rights, and her possession of a legal document that should uphold those rights, finds herself powerless. She represents the worthy citizens harmed by the corruption of Walpole's administration. Since this story immediately follows the account of Sarpedon, readers would notice how easily both men manipulate the law for their own immoral purposes.

The history of Maltolius's secret first marriage shows that the institutions that have previously regulated human life—the church, the sacrament of marriage, and the law, in the form of a contract that should force the fulfillment of vows—are now easily manipulated. The woman of worth loses her place to the adulteress, a female analogue to the promotion of unworthy men to high office.

John Trenchard: Anti-Cato

A similar example is the story attached to John Trenchard, the radical Whig who called for the prosecution of the South Sea managers in a series of essays published in the *London Journal* and signed "Cato."[7] M. M. Goldsmith has asserted that the age had a "Cato complex" (489): the courageous Roman represented perfect civic virtue and both Whigs and Tories attempted to identify themselves with Cato. In her portrait of Trenchard, Haywood reclaims Cato's reputation for the Tory opposition. Haywood's

[7] King believes Haywood targets Trenchard because he was an enemy of the Walpole administration, and Haywood hoped to gain a reward. This is a plausible explanation, but we should also consider his inclusion in the presentment against Mandeville as a possible reason Haywood would have attacked him.

"Romanus" is not motivated by higher principles; his interest in politics is purely self-interested. Romanus's duplicity and lack of honor is evident in his seduction of a young woman, "Graciana." Her father is a "leading Man in the Senate" and "one of the richest Citizens in the Island" (I: 14). To promote himself, Romanus secures a marriage betrothal to Graciana. Cupid explains to the traveller:

> While [Romanus] believed a marriage with Graciana would raise his Fortune in the World, so long he intended it; but when once the Scene was chang'd, and she no more could be subservient to his *Interest*, she ceased to be of consequence to his *Wishes:*—her Beauty—her Virtue, her Good-nature—her Truth and Tenderness, were all too light in his esteem, when poiz'd against the weightier Charms of Grandeur Noise, and Hurry:—a gilt Chariot and splendid Equipage had greater Attractions than the loveliest Eyes; nor would *Apollo*'s harp have had any Musick in it, comparable to the neighing of half a dozen *Flanders* mares, and the hoarse Bellowing of a numerous Train, crying, *What's you Honour's Will?—Ho, there, my Lord calls!* (I: 15)

The attractions of a woman cannot compare to the attractions of wealth. Romanus reveals his true character when Graciana's luck changes for the worse. Her dying father entrusted her fortune to a friend who invested and lost it, in the enchanted well. Romanus, "knew immediately she was undone, and consequently no wife for him," but he has to plot a way to break with her, since "their Loves had already proceeded as far as a Contract" (I: 16). Romanus, agitated by a "vile passion" for her, thinks "first to satiate that" in order "to make him entirely at ease" (I: 16). He seduces her by pretending that he still intends to marry her, even if the change in her circumstances forces them to delay. Graciana eventually yields, and Romanus, now satiated, coldly figures "all that remain'd now was how to get rid of her" (I: 17). The trick he devises, to protect his reputation and to release him from their contract, is to publicly expose her as unfaithful. He tells her to send letters to him at the address of a friend, and taking these letters, Romanus "expos'd

them to the Perusal of all those of her Friends, from whose Resentment he had any thing to fear" (I: 18). He thus proves she has another lover and wins over her influential relations, who now refuse to see her. Only Graciana suffers: "The Blame, the Infamy was hers alone, and he is at this day receiv'd and caress'd by the nearest of her Relations, while she is not permitted to own them as such, or to enter their Houses" (I: 18).

Romanus instead marries "Mariana," who brings him a "vast Fortune" (I: 19). His ambition is still unsatisfied, though: he longs for a title. Within a month of his marriage he begins a public affair with the "Duchess of Cruizalla"; as Cupid explains, "this Lady being at that time a very great Favourite with the Sovereign, 'tis highly probable his Passion might arise from a Hope that she would make her Lover's Fortune, either by procuring him a Title, or a Place at Court" (I: 20). Ironically, Romanus's pursuit of favor at court is thwarted by the Duchess's husband.

Romanus's sexual desire and his political ambition are fused, and his political career is tied to his sexual liaisons. It is impossible to tell whether his affair with the Duchess began from "ambition or inclination" because "the latter has ever been so much govern'd by the former, that it is to be question'd, if ever he thought it worth his while to pursue the one without some View of the other" (20). His ambitions have been impeded by jealous husbands and lovers, but that is not an indication that he is subservient to physical passion: "with his Ambition, he has the Mixture of a different Passion, tho' tis commonly in his power to govern it, whenever it seems to thwart the more predominant one" (I: 22). But Romanus is also capable of destroying a woman solely to satisfy himself, as demonstrated in his seduction and abandonment of Miranda, another victim whose fortune, like Graciana's, is ruined in the Well.

Romanus's crass opportunism in both bed and politics shows that he has little relationship to the virtuous Roman Cato. Trenchard did in fact marry an heiress who raised his fortune, and he had political ambitions (McMahon). Ironically, the earliest of "Cato's Letters" excoriated the leaders of the South Sea Company and called for their prosecution. That two of Romanus's female victims were ruined by the well may show that Haywood thought Trenchard all hypocrisy—not really concerned for the ruin of personal fortunes but merely posturing for political gain.

Fictions of Corruption: Windusius and Wyaria

These are examples of the amatory fictions attached to real persons. Haywood also included novella-length fictions that are not glossed in the key, apparently because they do not refer to real persons. While these stories do not further Haywood's ad hominem attacks, they do advance Haywood's larger themes. She shows that avarice and lust are linked, that morals are easily compromised for personal gain, and that women in the end will suffer for male ambition. According to Sylvana Tomaselli, a commonly held belief in the eighteenth century was "that women were the barometers on which every aspect of society, its morals, its laws, its customs, its government" could be judged (114). Thus, amatory fiction that shows the mistreatment of women revealed England's moral decline and barbarism.

An example is The "History of the Chevalier Windusius and the fair, false Wyaria" (I: 72-109). The story itself seems entirely fictional but is still shocking for the extreme dissolution that Haywood suggests is now the norm in England. The first part of Windusius's story is told by Cupid, who is able to provide some impartial judgment of the man (I: 61-72). Windusius is the gigolo to a concupiscent Duchess who promises to

raise his fortunes. If the traveler wonders why a young man would feel attraction to such an old woman, Cupid explains, “we are not to imagine that the Possession of her antiquated Beauties was his only Aim—he has a good deal of Ambition in his nature, and tis not to be doubted but that the hope of raising his Fortune by her means, had at least an equal share in the Inducement” (I: 61). Despite his apparent lack of personal merit, Windusius aspires to position and fortune. When the Duchess offers him the position of Gentleman of her Horse, a position that “was not unequal to his circumstances,” it “was not at all agreeable to the Ambition of *Windusius*” (I: 63). He insists instead that the Duchess fulfill a promise that “she would make Interest among her Friends for a Settlement for Him” (I: 64). His desired object is not the wife, but only the “Settlement” that comes with her. With his lover’s help, he soon meets a very rich young widow, Stanilla, who is “in every thing a match far above his hopes” (I: 64). When he seems to be succeeding in his courtship, the jealous Duchess intervenes and warns Stanilla against him (I: 65). The widow’s subsequent coldness is a devastating disappointment to Windusius, but the Duchess laughs at him. “Are you pleas’d,” he asks in astonishment, “I lose all hope of ever being master of the Fortune of *Stanilla*?” (I: 66). He again equates women and money; his goals are to master a fortune, not to deserve a woman. The Duchess advises him to make Stanilla jealous by courting another beauty, Aurelia. The plan backfires when Stanilla “was touch’d to the soul at his ingratitude” (I: 68). Like Stanilla, Aurelia is in every way superior to Windusius, but she sincerely falls in love with him during his false courtship. The Duchess advises Windusius to ignore her, too, which eventually causes Aurelia to write a letter breaking with him. “I desire no other Revenge for my abused Sincerity,” she writes, “than that you may, sometime or other,

find a Woman fair enough to create a real Passion in you; and as insensible of it, as you are of mine" (I: 70). Cupid takes up the cause of her revenge, stating, "[Windusius] must, at least for a time, suffer the same Soul-rending agonies his Ingratitude inflicted on the unfortunate *Aurelia*" (I: 71). This first part of Windusius's history proves him to be a callous fortune hunter, who easily replaces one woman with another, regardless of her worth and his lack of it. At this point, Cupid invites the melancholy Windusius to tell his story, and the narrative shifts to his subjective first person account.

After abandoning Aurelia, Windusius explains that he sojourns with the Duchess in the country and falls in love with Wyaria, the beautiful daughter of a country gentleman "vastly rich" who had promised her a dowry of 20,000 crowns. Windusius's courtship is at first welcomed both by Wyaria and her family, but Windusius is puzzled when Wyaria twice seems to throw herself at him, inviting his sexual advances. He is unnerved to find his future wife so forward, but she pursues him to his bedroom to reveal her secret: her brother-in-law has seduced her and then coerced her to continue in an incestuous affair. Wyaria confesses her disgust and repentance and implores Windusius to inform her father of it so that she may be sent away from home. Now Windusius becomes "all Man" and satisfies his desires with her. In the morning, he considers that he might still profit from her family's fortune:

> some remains of my former Tenderness still working in me in her behalf, join'd with a little Self-Interest, that if I acted the generous Part, related the whole Affair to the old Man, and told him withal, that my Love to his Daughter made me willing to forgive all Faults, and that I would still make her my Wife; he would double the Portion he design'd for her, and perhaps, make me the Heir of all his Wealth. (I: 83)

Windusius, faced with her shocking crime, is still intent on obtaining her money. He justifies his acceptance of Wyaria by claiming tender feelings, but it is clear that he is compromising his own honor. When he had sex with her—something he heroically avoided earlier—he proved he thought her unworthy to be his wife. But his personal honor—and hers—means little to him compared to the bribe her father might offer him.

However, Windusius's plan backfires when he discovers that her family will not release her fortune. Windusius reveals the incest, offers to marry Wyaria, and insists on the portion given to Wyaria's sister, the least he should expect in an offer "so much to my Dishonour" (I: 86). Her father postpones his decision and Windusius hears nothing for some time, but then a frantic letter comes from Wyaria begging him to rescue her: her father has declared she will never see Windusius again. "My hopes of Interest by her Father were utterly abolished" Windusius relates, "I found the old Villain rather than part with his Money would sacrifice his Daughter to all the Miseries of the most abhorrent and unnatural Lust" (I: 92). Readers might remember that Windusius has also been more influenced by money than Wyaria's welfare, making him and her father equally repugnant.

Windusius nonetheless pursues the matter, now supposedly out of concern for Wyaria, but always with her fortune in mind. Her father claims that Wyaria has admitted to inventing the story of incest in order to win his consent for the marriage. Windusius then produces Wyaria's letter, but her father disregards it. Wyaria is called on to testify for herself. She is brought in "all undress'd,—her Hair hanging loose upon her Shoulders, her Eyes swell'd with Tears, a moving Spectacle of Grief and Horror" (I:103). She tells Windusius she will never marry him and orders him away, then faints into the arms of her

brother-in-law. The image of Wyaria in such obvious distress, standing between two men who both want control of her so they can obtain her fortune, exposes a society in which avarice trumps compassion and morality.

Windusius is finally forced to desist. Years later he sees her in town and sends a letter to her, which she refuses. Windusius has experienced Aurelia's curse: he loves a woman who is insensible to his passion. He seem reconciled to his loss, though, since

> now the Foulness of *Wyaria*'s Soul appeared in all its deformity to me, and to all who knew her History; the vile *Batharius*, that Betrayer of her Honour,—that ruiner of her Virtue,—that Debaucher of her Principles—that Wretch, whom to avoid, a thousand times she has sworn she would hazard more than Life, is now the only Person she makes choice of for a Friend:—she has committed the Management of her Fortune wholly to his Care, lives in his House, scarce sees any-body but himself, admits no Visitors, nor will receive any Overtures of Marriage, tho' her Beauty and Estate has drawn the richest and most worthy Gentlemen of the Country to make them.—What judgment then can we form of her, but that, grown fond of the Crime for which she once appeared so penitent, she quits all other Considerations to indulge it? (I: 109)

As narrator, Windusius presents himself as motivated by love and honor. We know from Cupid's earlier narration, however, that Windusius's only goal was a profitable marriage. And, if Windusius's offer is tawdry, Wyaria's family seems to behave worse, instantly moving to protect the family fortune and letting Wyaria suffer. Windusius is too gullible to suspect the Duchess, who no doubt had a hand in turning the family against him, but the truth is he always was a fortune hunter. Windusius's last reflection on Wyaria shows that he is still enraged to lose her fortune to her brother-in-law, who now seems to command Wyaria's sexual preference as well. In short, everyone involved in the story is base, except for the two heiresses who are courted and rejected by an inferior man. Virtue does not exist, and the unthinkable crime of incest is reckoned more acceptable than dividing a fortune.

Amatory fictions like this one extend Haywood's critique of the supposed virtue of self-interest or the benefit of vice. She exposes the moral devastation created by self-interest and shows that women are the peculiar victims of her society's lust for money. The specter of incest presages complete social disintegration.

Novels and Secret Histories

In his study of the separation of public and private spheres in the eighteenth century, Michael McKeon claims that Haywood's secret histories are a debased form, where the text no longer refers to actual persons. Haywood's enigmatic keys to *Memoirs of a Certain Island*, for instance, "suggest that the key is becoming a vestigial convention of the *roman à clef* form, still in use but increasingly dysfunctional and unconcerned to unlock the mystery of actual particularity for which it is designed" (*Secret History* 632). In other words, fiction is overtaking current events. For a number of her novels, Haywood uses the subtitle "a secret history," but only to suggest that the story happened to a real person, not necessarily to a well-known person. And the reason for publishing someone's private secrets is to provide an instructive example for personal moral reform. "It is on this privately ethical score—and not for the political morality of exposing great men to public scandal—that the author decides against 'concealing it' from 'the Publick,'" McKeon writes (*Secret History* 638). Thus, Haywood's use of the designation "secret history" negates its previous association with public figures and politics and marks the continuing separation of the secret and private from the public.

McKeon acknowledges that in many of her fictions of private lives, Haywood nonetheless uses "politically resonant language" like "traitor," "tyrant," and "ingratitude" (*Secret History* 632). What do these "conventional markers of public reference" signify?

(*Secret History* 632). I would argue that Haywood was pursuing her conviction that the personal is political, and that public life cannot be separated from private life. The political problems that absorbed her attention—liberty and tyranny, loyalty and perfidy, disinterested virtue and personal interest—she saw too in the private realm. As Nicola Parsons acknowledges, "The secret history is located neither in the public nor private, but instead explores the boundaries and the connections between these two spheres" (42). Haywood will continue to examine these boundaries in her fiction. Readers of *Memoirs of a Certain Island* will see elements of several novels she published later. Wyaria's story, for instance, closely resembles that of Althea in *The Mercenary Lover*. Where she used the first as an allegory for political corruption, she uses the second as evidence of private corruption. She shows that the private life of the nation also suffers from the moral catastrophes caused by self-interest. These novels are the subject of Chapter 3.

CHAPTER THREE
"POLITICK SCHEMES, FOR FORMING INTERESTS AND CARRYING ON BUSINESS": THE MARRIAGE MARKET

"This knowledge I soon learnt by Experience," Moll Flanders confides to her readers, "That the State of things was altered, as to Matrimony, and that I was not to expect at London, what I had found in the Country; that Marriages were here Consequences of politick schemes, for forming Interests, and carrying on Business, and that Love had no Share or but very little in the Matter" (Defoe, *Moll Flanders* 55-56). Although Moll is a fictional character, eighteenth-century women did in fact face tough odds finding a husband on the marriage market. According to historian Lawrence Stone, "The seventeenth century saw a sharp rise in the size of the marriage portions paid by the bride's parents to the groom's parents"—upping men's expectations that they might make their fortune through marriage (*Family, Sex and Marriage* 330). By the eighteenth century, Ian Watt explains, the large surplus of marriageable women "found it more difficult to find a husband unless they could bring him a dowry. There is much evidence to suggest that marriage became a more commercial matter in the eighteenth century than had previously been the case" (142).

These financial incentives created additional complications. Until the passage of the Marriage Act in 1753, there was some confusion about what constituted a legally binding marriage. Church law had long recognized the exchange of verbal vows by persons of age before two witnesses as a legitimate marriage (Stone, *Uncertain Unions* 17). Common law did not recognize any marriages except those made in a church by a clergyman, however; thus, verbal spousals had no standing in property suits. The market

in clandestine marriages, made by suspended clergymen and carried out commonly in areas like Fleet Street, greatly muddied the waters, as well. In addition, the financial stakes in marriage inspired a number of other legal maneuvers, such as secret pre-contracts committing a person either to marrying a fiancé or to not marrying anyone else. Eliza Haywood viewed the legal landscape and saw numerous pitfalls for women who lacked the education to understand their rights.[8]

After writing about numerous true incidents of corruption and crime in *Memoirs of a Certain Island*, Haywood was ready to address contemporary social problems in subsequent later fiction. Although her earliest work focused more on the problem of passion and inconstancy, Haywood increasingly turned her attention to the problems created by the exchange of money in marriage. She realized that the system eroticized money, simultaneously turning women into sexual and economic objects. She also knew that in any game where men pursued their worldly interests through women, women would be the losers. In the second half of the 1720s, her critique of class power shifts: instead of jaded aristocrats, her libertine seducers become city merchants and businessmen using women to get ahead. The age did not object to the union of fortunes and strengthening of estates through marriage. In fact, "economic self-interest" was accepted as a fact of life and did not necessarily pose a problem for social or religious values (Watt 127). But Haywood's novels depict a world where economic self-interest has become the ruthless business of preying on defenseless women.

[8] Keith Thomas notes that Latin continued to be the language of legal documents until the 1730's, making legal knowledge "the prerogative of a social élite and a masculine one at that" ("Literacy" 101).

The Optimistic World of *The Conscious Lovers*

Eliza Haywood's largely negative representation of city merchants diverged from the more mainstream view, which held that the rising middle-class set a new standard for living well. The members of this business class were sometimes celebrated as the nation's best and most essential citizens. *The Spectator*, for example, praises them: "There are not more useful members of the commonwealth than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of nature, find work for the poor, add wealth to the rich and magnificence to the great" (I: 296). In addition, London's middle class claimed moral authority, boasting that their success showed their personal merit and industry. In the "questions of virtue" that Michael McKeon has posited as central to eighteenth-century thought, merchants and businessmen saw themselves as moral leaders. Perhaps no text is a better example of this cultural myth than Richard Steele's sentimental comedy *The Conscious Lovers* (1722). This play reforms the Restoration marriage plot, eliminating its threats to parental authority and social order. Although the protagonist, Bevil, has an independent fortune, he refuses to marry without his father's permission, even though his father will never approve his choice—the penniless orphan Indiana. Bevil's aristocratic father Sir John instead arranges a marriage to Lucinda Sealand, a wealthy merchant's daughter. Sir John's arrangements provide further complications because Lucinda does not love Bevil, but Myrtle, Bevil's best friend. Lucinda is also pursued by her well-born, fortune-hunting cousin, Cimberton. Consonant with the rational, humane ideals of the day, the play achieves a happy resolution without disobedience to parents, mercenary motives or even a duel. Bevil's love, Indiana, turns out to be Sealand's other daughter and co-heiress of his fortune.

Cimberton reveals his colors when he refuses a reduced settlement for Lucinda, but the nobly minded Myrtle protests, “no Abatement of Fortune will lessen her value to me” (5.3.267-268). And Sir John can finally approve his son’s choice, Indiana, now also an heiress. Happy, loving and economically advantageous marriages bless both couples. Sir John proclaims: “you have set the World a fair example: Your happiness is owing to your Constancy and Merit” (5.3.285-286). Thus, the cold-blooded financial concerns of marriage are softened by a glorification of companionate marriage and its fiction of marrying for love.

Although Sir John is a member of the gentry and Mr. Sealand only an India merchant, the union of their children represents the age’s confidence in the merit of the rising merchant class and their centrality to the strength of the country. “We merchants are a Species of Gentry, that have grown into the World this last Century, and are as honourable, and as useful, as you landed Folks,” Mr. Sealand tells Sir John (4.2.50-53). Steele asserts that businessmen are a new upper class, equal to the gentry in status and respectability.

Still, the play is very unsatisfying in at least one respect: the question of whether Bevil should marry a penniless woman for love is mooted by the ultimate eighteenth-century (and New Comedy) *deus ex machina*: the revelation of an inheritance. Should Bevil obey his father and marry Lucinda, when he loves another? Should he wed Indiana and forgo his own enrichment, since he has his own fortune and does not need another? Should he disobey his father in pursuit of his own happiness? These questions are neatly put aside by the happy resolution that ensures Bevil both happiness and wealth in marriage. The play wants to assert that the Bevil’s superior morality permits him to

ignore his bride's poverty, but it steals his chance to prove it. "The contradiction between true love and filial duty at last simply vanishes, leaving merely an assertion of the inevitable reward of virtue," Laura Brown notes, and that assertion is unsatisfying because "Sir John's avarice is rewarded along with his son's virtue" (*Dramatic Form* 172). The play seems to insist that happiness in marriage really does demand a bride's fortune.

As McKeon notes, Haywood was especially perceptive of the hypocrisy of middle-class marriages and "the new idealism of a progressive ideology, which says personal merit when it means cash, and replaces the old idol of status with the new reification of money" (*Origins* 261). Haywood does not seem to entertain nostalgia for a mythical past of aristocratic honor, such as that which Steele transfers to the middle-class Bevil. Rather, Haywood shows that middle-class men have a new, commercial view of marriage that precludes more traditional notions of honor. She saw clearly that men used the law to gain control of property—especially women's property. Merchants might claim the same merit as the gentry, but they conspicuously lack any recognition of the integrity of a man's word. Instead, they insist on documents that can be used in court. In their pursuit of fortune, Haywood's merchant-villains use the law as an instrument to traduce women. Since women are uneducated and particularly helpless to understand legal documents, Haywood shows that, rather than protecting women's rights, the law becomes a prominent tool for manipulating and impoverishing women.

From Feme Covert to Feme Overt: Public Justice in *The Distress'd Orphan*

Eighteenth-century husbands wielded enormous power over their wives. In English common law, a married woman possessed no individual identity. She was, in

legal terms, a “feme covert”—“covered” by her husband—and her rights disappeared behind his. A wife had no separate money or property unless specific provisions were stipulated in her marriage articles. She could not enter into contracts herself or sue in court, nor did she have any legal rights to her children. She could not leave her husband, and if she did, he could compel her to return (Skinner 92). A husband had the power of “restraining” his wife and enforcing “correction” through physical punishments (Blackstone 432). A husband’s powers were so broad that the author of the 1719 legal treatise *Baron and Feme* thought it necessary to clarify the limit of a husband’s authority: “Though our Law makes the Woman subject to the Husband, yet he may not kill her but it is Murder” (9). The famous jurist William Blackstone nonetheless expressed a sanguine view of the law when he insisted “even the disabilities, which the wife lies under, are for the most part intended for her protection and benefit. So great a favourite is the female sex of the laws of England” (433).

In 1726, Eliza Haywood published a short novel, *The Distress’d Orphan: or, Love in a Madhouse* that, under the cover of a love story, attacked the injustice of the legal authority men lorded over women. The heroine is an orphaned heiress, Annilia; her uncle Giraldo is her guardian. In order to gain permanent control of her fortune, Giraldo first seeks to marry Annilia to his son, Horatio. Raised together almost as brother and sister, the cousins initially recoil at a connection that seems incestuous. Horatio is soon persuaded to obey his father, however, who promises to make him “the greatest Man that ever has been of our Family” (29). Annilia remains ambivalent, hoping to reconcile her wishes to her uncle’s, but when she falls in love with the dashing Colonel Marathon, she realizes that “there were Joys in Marriage, which the faint Esteem she could bring herself

to feel for *Horatio*, would never let her experience with him" (32). The awakening of sexual desire initiates Annilia's maturity and inspires her to assert her own will against her uncle's. Annilia's subsequent resistance to Giraldo's plan leads him to the expedient of declaring her insane. He realizes that "he had the same Pretensions to her Estate while suppos'd a Lunatick, as his Son would have if made her Husband" (48-49). Giraldo lures Annilia into his study by promising to show her "the writings of her Estate," documents she has never before seen. As she reads them and disputes their meaning with Giraldo, workmen install iron bars on her chamber windows and locks on her door. Since Annilia's education was unusual—she was educated alongside her male cousin—she is far better prepared to debate her uncle than an ordinary young woman would be. Still, her reason and learning cannot protect her rights. Giraldo surprises Annilia and confines her in his house. When he begins to fear the neighbor's gossip, he decides to remove her to a private madhouse. "He had often been told," the narrator explains, "that for a good Gratification, the Doors would be made open as well for those whom it was necessary, for the Interest of their Friends, to be made Mad, as for those who were so in reality" (49).

Although Bethelem hospital, known more commonly as "Bedlam," was the largest mental asylum in eighteenth-century England, a private "trade in lunacy" grew throughout the century as private madhouses offered to board the insane in complete privacy. It is unknown how many of these houses existed, but, until Parliament began to regulate them in 1774, they operated independently and without any public scrutiny (Parry-Jones, 6-11). Naturally, the public became suspicious of the legality of these institutions. As early as 1706 Daniel Defoe reported in his *Review* that an unmarried heiress was illegally confined in one to coerce her into marriage, and in 1728 he railed

against “the vile Practice now so much in vogue among the better Sort . . . namely, the sending their Wives to Mad-Houses at every Whim or Dislike” (*Augusta Triumphans* 30). Recently, historian Elizabeth Foyster has counted affidavits protesting unlawful confinement submitted to the King’s Bench and has determined that these affidavits disproportionately concern wives. Of the 67 surviving affidavits submitted between 1738 and 1800, 48—or 72 percent—concern women rather than children or men, and of these, 36—or 75 percent—specifically concern wives (42). A number of these cases did involve wives who refused to surrender their separately owned property to their husbands. However, whether property was concerned or not, Foyster asserts that “Thanks to the proliferation of private madhouses in the eighteenth century, husbands had a tool of sexual control which had not been available to them in earlier periods” (47).

Haywood found the plot device of a private madhouse useful in *The Distress’d Orphan* both because it was an issue of contemporary public controversy and because it served as a metaphor for the institution of marriage. As a minor ward of Giraldo, as a feme covert, or as a lunatic, Annilia’s legal rights were about the same. Haywood makes this explicit in Annilia’s name, which seems to be derived from the Latin *nihil*, which means “nothing” and accurately describes what rights she can expect from English courts (Wilputte 51). According to Blackstone, “By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law: that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage” (430). In sum, a woman who marries ceases to exist. Bluestocking Sarah Chapone called this the “Law of Annihilation” (Chapone 52). As Annilia sits in her prison, her own existence erased from the world, she resents Giraldo’s seizure of her fortune. Yet she is grateful for one thing: “tho’ it was infinite Trouble to her to think that

they enjoy'd [her money], yet the Satisfaction it gave her to reflect that he had not her Person also, very much alleviated the Pain" (52). In other words, Annilia does not think marriage is as bad as forcible confinement—she thinks it is worse. As a wife, she would have even fewer rights, since she would also have to surrender her body sexually.

Early feminists voiced similar protests. In her daring 1736 treatise, *The Hardships of the English Laws in relation to Wives,* Chapone compares marriage to slavery, and declares that marriage is worse. "Wives have no property," she writes, "neither in their *own Persons*, *Children*, or *Fortunes*" (5). Citing the court's reasoning in the case of one Mrs. Lewis, Chapone notes that the court argued that "Marriage was a *State of Captivity*" and that "the Arguments of the Council make the Estate of Wives *equal* to, the Distinction of the Court *worse* than, Slavery itself" (6). Earlier in the century, the Tory polemicist Mary Astell asserted that wives were equal to slaves, "as they must be, if the being subjected to the *inconstant, uncertain, unknown arbitrary Will* of Men be the *perfect condition of Slavery*" (76). She declares that in marriage a woman had "by much the harder bargain. Because she puts herself entirely into her Husband's Power, and if the Matrimonial Yoke be grievous, neither Law nor Custom afford [sic] her that redress which a Man obtains" (101).

Both writers exploit the obvious contradiction in popular thinking that extolled John Locke's principles of natural rights and the necessity of limited monarchy on the one hand, and, on the other, the absolute sovereignty of the husband in the home. "If Absolute Sovereignty be not necessary in the State, how comes it to be so in a Family?" Astell demands. "*If all Men are born free,* how is it that all Women are born slaves?" (76). Chapone too realized the rhetorical power of Locke's ideas. Like Astell, she

compares the limited rights of the king to the unlimited rights of husbands. She writes, "no individual, not even the Sovereign himself, can *imprison* any Person for *Life*, at *Will* and *Pleasure*; the *Habeas Corpus* Act, providing for the Condemnation or Enlargement of the Prisoner" (5). A husband, of course, could do what a king could not.

Haywood's Annilia uses the same rhetorical strategy, deploying language famously employed by John Locke and cherished by the English public. When Giraldo still hopes to marry her to Horatio, he reminds Annilia she should obey her guardian and "her intended husband." She retorts, "He is not yet so . . . and to whatever Subjection I may be destined after Marriage, I take it ill that my Liberty should be restrain'd till then" (39). When Giraldo pressures her again, Annilia declares, "The Love of Liberty is natural to all, and I should have more reason to regret, than be pleas'd with the large Fortune left me by my Father, if it must subject me to eternal Slavery" (45). Finally, when she sits in prison, Giraldo makes one more attempt to secure her consent to marriage. With "dauntless fortitude" she tells Giraldo, that "not only to procure her Liberty, but to preserve her Life, she would never yield to be the Wife of a Man, who had consented to use her with so unexampled a Barbarity" (48).

It is no coincidence that Giraldo responds to Annilia's claims to personal liberty with the language of patriarchal authority employed by Locke's opponent, Sir Robert Filmer. Giraldo urges Annilia to defer to his rightful authority, telling her that she owes him the same duty she would owe her father. When he pushes her to marry Horatio, he reminds her of "the Obligations she had to him for the Care he had taken of her Education and the fatherly Tenderness of his Behaviour to her" (29). He insists on her gratitude, and pretends concern. He says, "My dear niece! . . . 'tis impossible to advise

you in any thing, which I am not confident is for your Good" (29). Yet Haywood's audience would know that Giraldo has chosen this moment to press Annilia because she will soon be fourteen years old, the age at which the law gave a ward the right to choose her own guardian. In fact, a guardian was supposed to be appointed only from those relatives who did not stand to inherit the orphan's estate, "that there may be no temptation, nor even suspicion of temptation, for him to abuse his trust" (Blackstone 449). Giraldo, by attempting to coerce Annilia, has already violated that trust, nullifying his claim to gratitude and invalidating his authority. Instead of Filmer's loving king, he is revealed to be Locke's corrupt tyrant. Like Mary Astell, Haywood exploits these political resonances to persuade her readers that Annilia, and all English women, face an intolerable injustice.

Haywood's solution for Annilia is unusual. Her stock-in-trade in the 1720's were tragedies about fallen women; *The Distress'd Orphan* is one of the few novels she wrote that has a happy ending. Annilia's lover Marathon (no doubt named for his endurance in seeking her out) eventually discovers where Giraldo has detained her and has himself admitted as a patient. As soon as he can arrange it, Marathon frees Annilia and helps her over the madhouse's walls to freedom. Knowing that her reputation is compromised by Marathon's unchaperoned rescue, Annilia agrees to marry him at once. Still, the way she proceeds is singular. She sends to "some of those with whom she had been most intimate of both Sexes" to serve as witnesses (62). Once her friends are gathered, she marries publicly and then she *and* her friends go to Giraldo's house, where Annilia "in mild Terms reproach'd him with his Usage of her, and demanded the Writings of her Estate" (62). Pointing to Marathon, Annilia asserts they "are now the Right of my Husband" (62).

Of course, this finale seems like an anticlimax. Annilia, previously independent and assertive, simply hands all the money and power over to her new husband. But this particular scene, with a plaintiff, a defendant, and a jury of her peers, resembles a courtroom drama, with Annilia acting as her own advocate. In essence, Haywood scripts a legal fairytale that concludes not with a wedding, but with a bride obtaining justice outside the courts that deny her existence.

Furthermore, Haywood's analogy of marriage and imprisonment emphasizes the isolation women suffered and suggests social exposure as a remedy. Although Jürgen Habermas extols the sociability of eighteenth-century England, arguing that common institutions like coffee houses and newspapers provided a unique opportunity for engaged political discourse, these venues routinely excluded women. Most scholars tend to accept the proposition that women were relegated to the home and to a private existence. Some writers, though, are reassessing whether the public sphere was gendered absolutely. Lawrence Klein argues that there were some public spheres open to women. Specifically, there existed an "associative public sphere" that was a source for "social, discursive cultural production" by both men and women (102). Although women were denied political citizenship, their opinions could be heard in this arena. The tea table was one such arena, corresponding to the coffee house for men, which served as a place for groups of women to gather and converse. And it is important, I think, that Haywood's own work, *The Tea Table* (1725), portrays a mixed company of women and men involved in polite debate.

When Annilia calls on friends, specifically of "both Sexes," she is calling on her associative public sphere. The power of this sphere is better understood if we clarify how the eighteenth-century understood the terms "public" and "private." As Klein explains,

> 'Sociability'. . . meant involving the company of others in a range of different settings and combinations. There were two key specifications to this sort of publicness. One was perceptibility. 'Public' matters were those that were exposed to the perceptions of some others or of people in general, while 'private' matters were generally imperceptible or kept from the perception of others. The 'public' and the 'private' were, thus, aligned with the difference of openness and secrecy, between transparency and opaqueness. (104).

Thus, shared information could make a seemingly private matter an issue of public concern. Consider the problem of one's public reputation. Haywood's age was one in which the rising middle class depended on its good credit; reputation made the man. Indeed, if a wife's "gross misbehavior" threatened her husband's reputation, the courts would permit a husband to "restrain a wife of her liberty" (Blackstone 433). Giraldo himself uses this excuse when he first confines Annilia: "I have good reason to believe your Indiscretions have of late rendred [sic] you liable to the Censure of the World, and must therefore restrain that Liberty you have but too much abused" (45). Claiming that her public exposure is a risk to him, Giraldo imposes on Annilia the secrecy of the madhouse—the same secrecy that wives were expected to endure in the home. Rather than being cowed from any publicity, however, Annilia insists on public transparency, gaining the empathy and support of the community. She refuses the domestic privacy imposed on women and instead steps out into the public sphere, harnessing the power of public opinion to restrain *Giraldo's* behavior.

Haywood's extralegal remedy had some basis in fact. In one famous case, a woman was declared insane and confined in her home by her brothers until other relatives

secured a writ of habeas corpus to free her. Both sides of the dispute published pamphlets to justify themselves to the public (Andrews 127-30). In addition, there were individual cases where the harsh imprisonment of a woman initiated riots of popular protest (Foyster 44, 58). In *The Distress'd Orphan*, public censure of Giraldo effects what the law will not: poetic justice. Giraldo falls into a fever and dies soon afterward from the "Shame and Disreputation, which the Discovery of his late Proceedings had drawn on him" (63). Likewise, his son Horatio, "being accounted equally blameable, not able to endure the Reproaches which were daily made him," goes abroad and is never heard from again.

As these judgments show, eighteenth-century England prided itself on its sociability and its good manners. Slyvana Tomaselli observes, "It was the mark of civilised societies that its strong members did not tyrannize the weaker ones, that they behaved kindly, humanely and politely towards them. Politeness and manners thus signalled the end of the enslavement of women" (120). The treatment of women was, therefore, a barometer of the nation's progress. Sarah Chapone appeals to this ethic when she pronounces (in reference to marriage laws) "I hardly believe it is possible to reconcile these Laws, with the Rights and Privileges of a free People" (47). Annilia's friends respond to Giraldo's "barbarity" with social censure—a punishment that makes it impossible for him to live in society. Haywood's narrator explicitly supplies the moral: "May all such base Designers meet the same Fate; let them in foreign Lands wander unfriended, unregarded, fit Society only for Beasts of Prey; while the Constant and Sincere meet with a Recompence proportion'd to their Merit, happy in themselves, and triumphant over those who seek or to detract, or to prejudice them" (63).

Of course, *The Distress'd Orphan*'s ending is not unproblematic. First, Annilia resists submission to Giraldo's power only to recede behind Marathon's, who assumes both her money and the power of a husband with disturbing ease. Second, the narrator has made readers somewhat skeptical of Marathon by informing us that his determination is partially motivated by the prospect of marrying an heiress. "Tho' he was really of a generous Disposition," Haywood writes, "and had a Stock of love for his *Annilia* . . . yet there are Charms in Riches, which still more endear a lovely Person, and . . . he could not find it in his heart to think it a Misfortune, that the Woman he was in love with had those Recommendations" (35). If we are tempted to read *The Distress'd Orphan* as a love story, or as scholar Deborah Nestor claims, "like most of Haywood's early novels, primarily a tale that illustrates the irrepressible power of love in excess" (Nestor ix), we ignore Haywood's direct reminders of the uglier realities of the world Annilia inhabits. Although Marathon apparently does truly love her person, a marriageable woman is also always a commodity. And, after her flight from one imprisonment (the madhouse) to the dubious refuge of another (marriage), we have to worry about her new master.

In this text Haywood makes a surprisingly bold critique of marriage and the law's treatment of women. She creates sympathy *both* for the innocent maid suffering under the abuse of masculine authority *and* for the indomitable ward who insists on her rights. It may be significant that *The Distress'd Orphan* was one of Haywood's bestselling novels. In an age when publicity was used as a threat to intimidate women, Haywood counters that public exposure could be good for women, since it would provide public scrutiny of private places and help regulate men's behavior behind closed doors. She rejects the isolation and anonymity of domestic privacy and optimistically believes that society

would prohibit the "barbaric" treatment of women; the courts, in Haywood's view, are sadly behind the times. In an age when new spheres of sociability activated innovative forms of public discourse and democratic debate, Haywood insists on the participation of women. Sociability itself becomes a democratic remedy for injustice. If women could not take their cases to a court of law, they might find satisfaction in the court of public opinion.

Promises and Contracts: *The City Jilt*

In the 1720s, marriage law was complicated. Uncertainty of what constituted a binding union persisted in England until the passage of the Marriage Act in 1753. By the early eighteenth-century, most English marriages were validated in a church ceremony that involved a public wedding and the posting of banns (Probert 250). Yet an older, customary form of marriage was still recognized by the church court: simple "contract marriages" or "verbal spousals." Ecclesiastical courts had long upheld marriages solemnized only with mutual promises made before witnesses and followed by sexual union (Stone; *Family, Sex and Marriage* 31). Contract marriages were not recognized by civil courts, however, and had no standing in property suits (Stone; *Family, Sex and Marriage* 32). Contract marriages were also notoriously difficult to prove (Probert 251).

The erosion of this older custom based on promises and its replacement by a public ceremony validated with legal documents is one of Haywood's subjects in *The City Jilt; or, The Alderman Turned Beau* (1726). Specifically, this novel features the seduction of a young woman on the promise of marriage—a confusion created by the existence of contract marriages. This was a problem that also alarmed Daniel Defoe. His character Moll Flanders apparently believes herself legally married to the older brother in

Colchester because they promised to marry: “he had all along told me, I was his Wife, and I look’d upon myself as effectually so, as if the Ceremony had passed” (31). Her lover, however, easily proves otherwise. Defoe wrote further on the problem created by unfulfilled marriage promises in his later tract, *Conjugal Lewdness; or Matrimonial Whoredom* (1727). Defoe notes that women may enter into a sexual relationship with a man based on his promise to marry her, only to be abandoned later, perhaps with a child to care for. “Let the Woman take it for granted . . .” he writes, “that whenever she yields on such Terms she will be left in a lurch, and exposed” (291). *The City Jilt* depicts the ruin of a woman who succumbs to such promises. By highlighting the extreme legalism of commercial London, Haywood also exposes the fraud of modern marriages that were made for money and resemble prostitution.

The “jilt” is a stock character in the eighteenth-century; as a letter in *The Spectator* explains, “The coquette is indeed one degree towards the jilt; but the heart of the former is bent upon admiring herself, and giving false hopes to her lovers; but the latter is not contented to be extremely amiable, but she must add to that advantage a certain delight in being a torment to others” (II: 234-35). Haywood is not writing a story of male victimhood, however. This is a revenge story in which a jilted woman becomes a jilt, exploiting men with promises as she had been exploited, and using sex as bait. In this novel Haywood equates marriage with prostitution; bargains are made in both for sex and money. The language of love is shown throughout to be bankrupt; it only masks the real financial interests that drive the marriage market.

The world of the jilt is the city, where mercenary motives are clothed in respectability. In this tale, the protagonist, Glicera, is a naïve young woman eligible for

marriage. Her father's fortune has made her a desirable object, so she does not lack suitors. But the suitors are not motivated by Glicera's person:

> *Glicera* was the Daughter of an eminent Tradesman: the Reputation of whose Riches drew a greater number of Admirers to his House, than the Beauty of his fair Daughter's Person . . . The most favour'd of all who made Pretensions to her, was young *Melladore*, the son of a near Neighbor; he was handsome, witty, well made, and seem'd to have an infinity of Affection for her. (85)

The two men who control Glicera's destiny are both engaged in deceit. Her father trades on his reputation, but Glicera soon discovers he is not what he seems. Her fiancé "seem'd" to love her, but in this too she is mistaken. The fairy tale beginning is quickly succeeded by a seedier tale. Glicera is betrayed by her father, who dies loaded with so much debt that she is left virtually penniless. He had the reputation of wealth without the substance of it, a problem Glicera was completely ignorant of, even though her future depends on her father's finances. The narrator praises Glicera's father ironically by lamenting the loss of "the Care of a Tender Parent" (87). In fact, her father's care did not include protecting the portion that should have been hers or even providing for her survival. Even so, she is worse off without him.

The other man who should protect her, Melladore, also betrays her. Glicera guilelessly informs him that she is now destitute, and Melladore immediately lies to her, employing the typical rhetoric of the honest lover: "he did not fail to tell her, that her adorable Person was of itself a Treasure . . . that he rather rejoiced . . . at this Opportunity to prove the Disinterestedness of his Affection" (88). Melladore's response, so close to Myrtle's in *The Conscious Lovers*, is a polite reflex, and a sham. The gullible Glicera believes him "because she wish'd it so"(88). He "artfully" deceives her so that she still expects to marry, but the narrator informs us that Melladore's love was always false.

"Vastly different now were his Designs," the narrator informs, "the real Love he had was to the Wealth of which he expected she would be possess'd; but that being lost, his Passion also vanish'd" (88). Melladore does not immediately break with her, though. His "brutal appetite" remains, and he plots to "attack" Glicera sexually before abandoning her (88). His reason for pursuing Glicera seems malicious, even vengeful, and it shows how easily he changes from being the protector of her honor to the destroyer of it. During their courtship, Glicera's "equal ardor" indicated that he could make an easy conquest of her. "Scarce cou'd he refrain from taking those Advantages which her Innocence and Love afforded him," the narrator reports. And only the "extremest Respect" prevents him (86). But when he knows she will not be his wife, he loses that respect.

Haywood indicates that Glicera has good reason to believe that Melladore will marry her. Rather than wait for her mourning to end, Melladore urges consummation and promises marriage later:

> He told her, that since their Hearts were united too firmly to be ever separated, 'twere most unjust to themselves and the soft Languishments which both confess'd, to make their Bodies observe a cruel Distance:—That Custom between them now was needless, and tho' in regard to Custom, and that Decorum which enslaves the World, the Ceremony which was to authorize Possession had not yet passed; yet might they in secret indulge those Wishes to which Marriage hereafter would give a Sanction. (88)

Glicera is finally "subdued" by his "Vows" (88). When she becomes pregnant, she urges Melladore to fulfill his promises. Glicera "press'd him to marry her in terms so moving and so tender, that had he not been abandoned by all Sense of Honour or of Justice, he would, indeed, have fulfilled what he so often, and so solemnly had vow'd" (89). Having never intended to marry her, he merely replies that "it was not consistent with his Circumstances to take a Wife without a Portion" (89). Glicera makes another appeal for

the sake of their child. In a letter she writes, “Nature, Religion, Pity and Love, all plead on its behalf . . . be just then to your Vows—Remember you are mine as much in the Eyes of Heaven, as if a thousand Witnesses had confirm’d our Contract . . .How often have you sworn I was your Wife” (90-91). Glicera reminds Melladore that his swearing to the marriage is a legal contract in her eyes, even if her only witnesses are the “Eyes of Heaven.” She also invokes the true reasons for marriage—heaven and children. Melladore puts his “Circumstances,” that is, his income, before other considerations.

Glicera’s most poignant rebuke reveals Melladore’s cruelty. “If with the loss of my Dower I also lost your Heart, why did you not then reveal it?” she writes. ”What Provocation had I e’er given you, that you should join with Fortune to undo me? *join,* did I say?. . . My Innocence, my Reputation, and my Peace of Mind by thee destroy’d” (91). Indeed, there seems to be no reason for Melladore to have pursued her except that he had opportunity. The carelessness with which he “ruins” her shows the cold brutality of a man who has lost “Nature, Religion, Pity and Love.”

After a second, more accusatory letter, Melladore responds, faulting Glicera for lacking a “better Understanding” than to believe a love affair would lead to marriage. His letter shows that his only reason for marriage is the financial settlement. Melladore chides Glicera for her failure to fulfill the contract he agreed to:

> Marriage, as you justly observe, obliges the Pair once united by those Tyes to wear a *Show* of Love; but where is the Man who has one Month become a Husband, that can with truth aver he feels the same, unabated Fondness for his Wife, as when her untasted charms first won him to her Arms.—Had Circumstances concur’d, I could, however, have been content to drag those Chains with you, so uneasy to be borne, by most of those who wear them; but since Affairs have happened contrary to both our Expectations, lay the fault on Fate, and not on me, who would else still avow’d myself to be what I once was. (93-94)

Melladore admits that he would have carried on pretending to love her if she had given him a fortune. Rather than a bourgeois man of moral character, Melladore is a fraud.

Melladore's indifference creates such a "Hurricane" of outrage that Glicera is transformed from helpless victim to vengeful fury. In despair she attempts suicide, has a miscarriage and suffers a near fatal illness. Her suffering marks a purification. She is cured of her madness and rage, but still harbors a yearning for revenge on "that whole undoing Sex" (96). Wiser now, she is beyond the attempts of other men who seek to seduce her, as Melladore did, through seemingly honorable promises: "she was not to be deceived again by the most specious Pretences" (96). Instead, she sets out to deceive the men who seek her as a mistress. Because her beauty makes her desirable, she entices men "to advance both her Interest and Revenge" (96). She becomes a coquette who enriches herself with the gifts of hopeful city men while denying them the satisfaction of fulfillment. It is now her turn "to appear amiable in the eyes of Mankind" (101).

Just as Melladore dominated the first part of her story, the city Alderman, Grubgard, dominates the second. He is an aging Satyr who lusts for Glicera. Her negotiations with Grubgard resemble, in some ways, the usual negotiations for a marriage. Haywood's satire here is that financial exchange in marriage is little different from prostitution. Just as Melladore had exploited her naiveté, Glicera targets Grubgard because of his "age and dotage" (96). She expects to "profit" more from him than her other admirers; instead of a bride's "portion," she affords him a "Double Portion of seeming Kindness" (96). Her pretended preference for him makes it possible to fool him out of his money. He pays court with numerous gifts, but "The last and greatest Favour was yet to come, and he assured her that there wanted only that to engage him to make

her a Settlement, which would support her in a manner as grand, as that in which the wife of Melladore at present liv'd" (97). His assurance is an inverted marriage—the "settlement" comes after the consummation, and the money will give her a status equal to Melladore's legal wife. Mistresses did sometimes receive legal settlements, like wives.

Glicera elegantly leaves the bargaining with Grubgard to her maid, Laphelia. While Melladore had insisted on sex first, Laphelia insists on money first. Where women bring money to marriage with the dowry, a man brings money to a woman in prostitution. In a sense, the prostitute takes on the role of the fortune hunter. Laphelia declares that "No Man ever gain'd his Will on a fine Lady . . . till he had lost a good Sum to her at Cards;—nothing discovers the Passion of a Lover so much as freely parting with his Money" (100). Grubgard agrees to lose his money to Glicera, and Laphelia continues to assure him that his money will eventually win her. Glicera's manipulation of Grubgard takes a more serious turn when she learns that Grubgard owns the mortgage of Melladore's estate. Glicera schemes to get it from him. Grubgard again bargains with Laphelia for sex first: "let her put me in possession of her Charms, and I will put her in possession of the *Writing*" (111). The "writing," the legal document, is what Melladore denied Glicera. Laphelia rebukes Grubgard for thinking Glicera so easily bought: "you talk as if you were in *Change Alley*, where they chaffer one *Transfer* for another—is such a Woman as *Glicera* to be had by way of a bargain?" (112). The language of the stock exchange emphasizes the buying and selling of women as commerce. In fact, women are exchanged in bargains—both as prostitutes and as wives, and the two are talking about a financial bargain for Glicera's body. And in both marriage and prostitution, social convention makes it possible to pretend they are talking about love. Laphelia pretends

that Glicera is in love with Grubgard, on the point of yielding. He believes her, and as the foolish Glicera had done earlier with Melladore, trusts that she will fulfill her promises: "she shall have the Mortgage, and I will trust to her Goodness for the Recompense for my Passion" (112).

At cards, Grubgard offers the mortgage in a wager for a kiss. When she wins, Glicera immediately takes steps to secure the document legally. She knows she must follow the letter of the law or she will be cheated. She calls her lawyer and Laphelia to witness the transfer of the mortgage to her. Having given the mortgage in order to possess Glicera, Grubgard now "began to testify by his Behaviour that he look'd upon her as his own" (115). But Glicera interrupts his attempt. She rebukes him for sinning and advises him to prepare his soul for death. He protests that she had promised "not to be ungrateful to the Man who truly lov'd you"—again equating money and love (115). "The Man who truly *Loves* would *Marry* me" she rejoins, "that is not in thy power, already art thou wedded, then what pretence hast thou to a noble Passion" (115). Just as Melladore's rejection sent Glicera into illness, now Grubgard suffers a "shock" that "sent him to answer in another World the Errors he had been guilty of in this" (116).

Poetic justice is also meted out to Melladore, who is punished for denying Glicera her moral and legal rights. He finds himself in complicated legal difficulties. First, he abandons Glicera in order to marry Helena, an heiress "reputed to be worth 5000 Crowns" (95). The day after the wedding, Melladore is prevented from claiming her inheritance by a Caveat, a legal document that stops payments from her father's estate. A male relative has, it turns out, challenged Helena's legitimacy by claiming that her mother never legally married her father. Ironically, Helena's mother may be a victim of a

non-legal marriage; she is unable to produce any documents to prove it. Her difficulty establishing her rights as a wife is exponentially increased by the corruption of the courts: "the Suit on both sides was carryed on with the utmost Vigour, the Gentlemen of the long Robe flattering their Clients of each Party with hopes of Success" (102). Melladore confidently proceeds to trial, sure he will win. Regardless of the truth, plaintiff and defendent have ample evidence in their support: "both sides made out their several Cases in so fair a manner, and had so great a Number of Evidences ready to attest the Truth of what they said, that they deceived themselves" (102). Melladore loses the case, however, when his mother-in-law's witnesses are judged to be perjurers. Thus, Melladore loses his "right" because of a sham marriage, just as Glicera had.

Melladore's marriage, made for money, turns out to be a very unhappy one. Helena's character is vastly inferior to Glicera's; she has an affair and attempts to elope. The couple argue over money and Helena takes revenge on her husband by spending. Just as Glicera the prostitute obtains luxurious gifts from her admirers, Helena the wife charges expenses to her husband and, according to the law, he must pay his wife's debts. "In this kingdom how great is the Privilege of Wives!" the narrator exclaims (105). In this respect, a wife could exercise some financial power over her husband. Melladore's finances deteriorate until he is forced to mortgage his family estate to Grubgard. "How truly wretched now had a few Months made the once prosperous, rich, gay, haughty *Melladore*," gloats the narrator, "and how severely did the unerring Hand of Providence revenge the injuries he had done *Glicera*!" (106).

Glicera's extralegal pursuit of her wifely "right" complements the work of Providence. Laphelia is surprised when Glicera plots for Melladore's mortgage, and

rebukes her: “is it not enough for your Revenge that the Man who had wrong’d you is undone in every Circumstance, without triumphing yourself in the ruin of his Fortune?” (108). But Glicera protests, “That Fortune . . . ought to have been mine, had *Melladore* been just . . . never shall I think of wrongs repair’d till I am in possession of my Right” (108). She means only the right to his estate, “for his Person,” she says, “were he in a Condition, is now become unworthy my Acceptance” (108). Where he had reproached her for failing to fulfill the terms of their contract, Glicera now prosecutes the wife’s claim to his estate. Where he had “ruined” her, he laments “the impending and irretrievable Ruin which hangs over my head” (118). Melladore makes a final epistolary attempt to ingratiate himself with his enemy, but fails. His letter begging for her help does finally satisfy her revenge, however: “The utmost Malice of the wong’d *Glicera* was now fully satiated; ample was the Recompence which Heaven allow’d her Injuries, and she acknowledged it, nor wish’d the Offender further Punishment” (118). Glicera allows him to raise money to buy an army commission in hopes of repairing his circumstances. Providentially, he goes abroad and is killed in his first battle.

Once left with no support, Glicera has made for herself “a sufficient competency to maintain her for her Life” (118). She has had to practice masculine deceptions in order to secure her rights as a wife. She and Laphelia retire to Melladore’s country house, as if she were his widow, and Glicera “gave over all designs on the Men” (118). She becomes a woman of charity, valued by her community: “Few Persons continue to live in greater Reputation, or more endeavor by good Actions to obliterate the memory of their past Mismanagement, than does this Fair Jilt; whose artifices cannot but Admit of some Excuse, when one considers the Necessities she was under, and the Provocations she

received from that ungrateful Sex" (119). Like Haywood's other fallen women, she lives on to become a virtuous citizen and gains a "greater Reputation" for good deeds that the bad reputation she had before. Haywood thus redeems her from her unscrupulous pursuit of Melladore's destruction.

A Case of Bigamy: *The Double Marriage*

If *The City Jilt* tackles the problem of customary marriages, *The Double Marriage; or, The Fatal Release* (1726) addresses another kind of dubious marriage: clandestine marriage. Verbal spousals, or "contract marriage," had been in decline by the early seventeenth century (Probert 250). But by the early eighteenth century, there was a "roaring trade" in clandestine marriage (Lemmings 345). The historical record shows that most English marriages early in the century occurred within the limits later established by the Marriage Act of 1753: they were performed in the church of England, by a clergyman, after the posting of banns and with parental consent (Probert 249). London, however, was a different case. A study of London records from the 1740s, for instance, suggests that over half of all marriages were so-called "Fleet marriages." (Probert 249). These ceremonies were performed by a clergyman imprisoned for debt at the Fleet prison. Because these marriages were both cheap and private, the Fleet attracted couples marrying without parental consent. Privacy also aided bigamy: according to historian Rebecca Probert, "Fleet marriages figured heavily in bigamy cases" (253). The "Double Marriage" of Haywood's title refers to these two problems associated with Fleet marriages: her protagonist enters first into a clandestine marriage and then into a bigamous one.

Historian Lawrence Stone contends that the rise of "affective individualism" in this period pressured parents to allow their children more choice in marriage. His survey of literature, drama and journalism "shows that there was a prolonged public argument during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries about a child's freedom of choice of marriage partner, with more liberal views slowly but steadily becoming more common among authors catering both to the middling ranks of commercial and professional people, and also to the wealthy landed classes" (*Family, Sex and Marriage* 280-281). In contrast, David Lemmings has argued that the Marriage Act of 1753 is proof that English elites still viewed marriage as a means of acquiring wealth and status. Since the act required parental consent for persons under 21, decisions about marriage were firmly under a father's control. Lemmings concludes, "the act was passed to protect the interests of families against the powerful forces of affection between individuals" (359). Haywood's marriages in this novel are doubled in this way, too: one is made for love, another for family interest.

In *The Double Marriage* a young man who secretly weds against his father's will is persuaded to commit bigamy when his father's choice—a very rich and beautiful woman—proves too tempting to deny. Many stories of the pain caused by arranged marriages focus on women. This novel is one of the few that shows how young men suffer when used as pawns to advance their fathers' ambitions. It depicts a generational war between a son raised like a gentleman to uphold his honor and his word and his greedy father, who betrays his word for gain. The story opens with the expectations of a marriage between the children of two families fairly equal in status. Maraphill is a man "no less eminent for his great Possessions than for the antient and worthy Family from

which he was descended" (107). Maraphill's son Bellcour is destined for Alathia, the daughter of a gentleman "who for Services he had made acceptable to his Country, had been rais'd above the Gentry, and had something of the advantage of the father of *Bellcour* in *Grandeur*, as he had the contrary in the point of *Wealth*"[9] (107). Haywood insists throughout her career that no marriage can be happy unless the partners are relatively equal in wealth and status. Where one partner is far richer or of much greater status, mercenary marriage is the inevitable result. This is a marriage, however, in which both families benefit—a union of fortune and title. The children grow to love each other, in compliance with their parents' wishes, and the story opens just as Bellcour, now a young man, feels it necessary to declare his love to Alathia. Naturally, he believes his father will approve.

This beginning seems to guarantee the success of their intended marriage. But the older, gentler method of arranging marriages has been replaced with a simple grab for cash. Regardless of any previous understanding between the two families, Maraphill seizes the opportunity to marry Bellcour to a wealthier bride. Maraphill's friend Boanarus writes that he is returning from Jamaica with an enormous fortune and a marriageable daughter. Boanarus is a less worthy a man than Alathia's father: he left England in "discontent" to try his fortune in the West Indies, a detail that suggests that perhaps, like transported felons, he *had* to leave England. Furthermore, he did not even earn the fortune he returns with; it is the gift of a dying friend. But Maraphill decides immediately to marry his son to Boanarus's daughter. Bellcour protests that he cannot love her. "You know that where the Heart is already taken up, all other Charms are ineffectual," he says,

[9] Alathia's father is not named.

reminding his father that he is in love with Alathia. But Maraphill's view is that his son is his possession and should be his puppet: "do you not remember that your Heart ought to have been at my disposal?" (111). And yet, readers must protest, Bellcour *has* disposed of his heart according to his father's wishes. Now that Maraphill has other plans, he expects his son to happily transfer his affections to another woman. Maraphill becomes enraged at Bellcour's assertion of his feelings, and petulantly banishes Bellcour from his presence until he "better learned his Duty" (112). Her narrator allows that "The Case indeed on both sides was hard, and scarce can one blame either the *Resentment* of the *Father*, or the *Resolution* of the *Son,* tho' both might have behav'd with greater Moderation" (112). This tap on the wrist for Bellcour's disobedience indicates the narrator's sympathies.

Bellcour knows his duty, but his education as a gentlemen here conflicts with his duty to his father. He can fence, ride and dance as well as "any Nobleman at Court" (107). He also values his honor. He "resolved now to be disobedient, and thought the *breach* of it a less Crime than *Falsehood* or *Ingratitude* to a Mistress, to whom he had so often vow'd an everlasting Faith" (112). Bellcour's adherence to the integrity of his word separates him from his father, who ignores his arrangement with Alathia's father and later insults his old friend.

Maraphill is more than simply fickle. His extreme cruelty to Bellcour shows readers he is an unreasonable tyrant. When Maraphill suspects that Bellcour has secretly married Alathia (which he has), he flies into a rage and draws his sword on his son. Maraphill makes a terrifying curse. If Bellcour has married, "never will I see thee, but with Horror, nor mention thee but with Curses.—Oh all ye Powers! continued he, if

Bellcour be the Husband of *Alathia*, let every kind of Mischief fall upon him; let Poverty and Shame be the least of Evils that shall attend him; but *Guilt* be added to his *Wretchedness*, Fiends haunt his Steps, and sudden Death overtake him, and plunge him deep in ever-during Hell"[10] (121). Bellcour is deeply affected by his father's passion: "How terrible were Words like these, proceeding from a *Father's* Mouth! The *Soul* of *Bellcour* shrunk back with Horror" (121). Maraphill's horrible curse, calling on heaven to destroy his own son, is utterly unnatural.

The argument between father and son now devolves to legal matters. Cowed, Bellcour lies and denies his Fleet marriage. Maraphill wants him to depart immediately to marry Boanarus's daughter, Mirtamene. In an attempt to stall his father, Bellcour then claims that he has promised Alathia never to marry anyone else. His father, who cares little for the integrity of a gentleman's vow, insists that law is all that matters. "Tut, *reply'd the old Man*, the Law takes no Cognizance of a *Verbal* Contract" (123). Bellcour then insists there is a written contract between them, "and no less than the Forfeit of the whole Estate which on your Death descends to me, is the Penalty, if without her consent I wed another" (123). Rebellious children did sometimes sign such contracts to avoid forced marriages (Stone; *Family, Sex and Marriage* 35). Maraphill the city merchant understands that while a man's word can be denied, contracts can be enforced. Reassured that his son has not legally married Alathia, he thinks only about how to undo this contract. He decides that Bellcour should visit Alathia and secure a release from his promises. Bellcour agrees, provided that his father "would not insist on his leaving him, protesting that in all his Life he had never felt so sensible a grief, as that which the

[10] Modern editors sometimes represent Haywood's dashes as em dashes or en dashes. In this text and in the edition of *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* that I use, the editor uses en dashes. However, in order to be consistent, I will use the em dash throughout this manuscript.

Thoughts of being banished from his Presence had involv'd him in" (124). Maraphill has forced Bellcour to choose between the two people he loves most, and Bellcour seems to choose his father.

Bellcour now seems to be playing his father's game. Consequently, Bellcour's intentions are, for the first time, doubted by the narrator:

> it cannot be imagin'd that he had any other meaning in this than to gain time, and prevent his Father from sending him to some Place where it would be impossible for him either to see, or send to her; and he related what had pass'd with so much Sincerity, that she had not the least cause to doubt of his Affection; nor that he had any other Design in what he requir'd of her, than by lulling asleep the Fears and Watchfulness of *Maraphill*. (124)

The narrator's reassurance of Bellcour's intentions here actually raises doubt about them—can it be imagined that he had other intentions? Bellcour has lied to his father and has come for the release to please Maraphill: perhaps Bellcour already knows he must break with Alathia in order to preserve his relationship with his father. Alathia, tragically trusting, signs a "Release from all former Contracts and Obligations" and hands it over to her husband.

Still distrusting Bellcour, Maraphill bundles him into a coach and takes him to meet Mirtamene. In a scene from a romance, Bellcour happens to rescue her from a ravisher in a wood, inspiring her with true love. Discovering that the exquisite beauty is his intended bride, he immediately regrets his marriage to Alathia:

> All that Resolution, which the tenderness he had borne *Alathia* had inspir'd him with, vanish'd at the sight of *Mirtamene*; and as before he was only anxious to evade marrying her, without totally disobliging his Father, his horrors now sprung from the Reflection, that he was not in a condition to become her Husband. –How did he now repent tying that irrevocable Knot!—how regret the sudden disposing of himself! A thousand times he curs'd his Passion for *Alathia*, his Unbelief that there was a Woman in the World so infinitely more worthy, as now to his chang'd

> Nature, *Mirtamene* seem'd;—almost distracted to find how much he lov'd, how much he was belov'd, yet was incapable of enjoying the Fruits of such a mutual Passion—How blest beyond the reach of Words, (said he to himself) might I have been, in added Wealth, paternal Love, and the possession of a Creature form'd to bestow immortal Happiness. (137)

Bellcour's "chang'd Nature" is a result of his encounter with Mirtamene. Where before he was innocently loyal to Alathia, now he sees his personal interests: money, his relationship with his father and the satisfaction of his sexual desires. Bellcour transforms from the honorable gentleman to the wordly fortune hunter. The ironic, romantic rescue only highlights Bellcour's descent into moral corruption.

Haywood details his inner "Contest between Love and Honour" with unusual sensitivity. In the days before his marriage to Mirtamene, Bellcour cannot convince himself either to reveal his marriage to Alathia or to consent to marry Mirtamene. His father continues his curses and terrifies Bellcour with fears of "Want, Shame, Censure and all the Ills of Poverty," if he fails to obey. But "the Wrong he was about to do *Alathia*, awak'd Conscience with so severe a Check, that he was *then* more resolute than ever, rather to die than be guilty of so detestable a Crime" (138). His mental agony is at last resolved by the "delight" of Mirtamene's embrace. "In fine," the narrator summarizes,

> the fears of Beggary, the Desire he had to possess *Mirtamene*, together with the Reflection that tho' he was marry'd to the other, it had been done with so much privacy, that no Person but herself had the power of declaring, and that she neither knew the Name nor place of Abode of the Clergyman who had joined their Hands, and that since he had a Release from her own Hand from all former Ties and Obligations; made him no longer hesitate to satisfy at once his father's Will, and the wild Cravings of his own Desires. (138-39)

In other words, because he knows Alathia is too unsophisticated to assert her legal rights, he thinks he can get away with it. Now he is glad she signed the sham release and he

thinks of it as a device to use against her in court. Women like Alathia, loving and trusting, are easily deprived of their rights by their ignorance of the law. Although they were legally married, Bellcour has made it possible to evade his responsibilities to her. His honor, which depended on his word, is now at odds with the law that depends on a written document.

Bellcour's satisfaction immediately unravels, however. Alathia, "that tender and obliging Wife," hears Bellcour has married and journeys as a man to Plymouth for proof (139). Bellcour is not surprised to see her, since "*Guilt*, tho' not *Love*, brought her so frequently to his mind" (140). He confesses his crime and urges her to leave, but "the Gentleness of her Nature" prevents her from becoming angry with him. Instead, she takes her sword and stabs herself. "You shall no more be persecuted with *Alathia, cry'd she*." (140). Mirtamene hears Bellcour's protesting cry and arrives to find him next to Alathia's bloody corpse. The narrator emphasizes Bellcour's anguish:

> What was now the condition of *Bellcour*, let any one, if it be possible for them to do so, conceive. He saw the Woman whom he had once lov'd, with an extremity of ardor breathing her last, through his Ingratitude and Perjury . . . on the one side; and on the other, the deceived *Mirtamene* with, even in ignorance, Reproaches in her Eyes . . . he could not live and bear it. (140-141)

He too stabs himself, asks Mirtamene's forgiveness, and "turn'd to the dead Body of *Alathia*; Now, now my dear wrong'd Wife, I return for ever to thy Arms" (141).

Mirtamene learns the lesson of the story, that "Interest, Absence, or a new Passion, can make the most seeming constant Lover false" and makes a resolution "ever to contemn and hate that betraying Sex" (141). For the novel's motto, Haywood chose a quotation from Nathanial Lee's play *Mithradates, King of Pontes* (1693): "Inconstancy's the Plague which first or last / Taints the whole Sex, the catching Court-Disease" (105).

In Lee's play this quote describes women, but in Haywood's world it describes men. Even Bellcour, honest and honorable, was capable of inconstancy. He is not a villain, however, and his final act of contrition proves that he was still honorable.

Bellcour is a victim, and the real villains of the piece are Maraphill and Boanarus, who forced a marriage on their children in order to gratify themselves. Haywood punishes them both with early deaths, but *The Double Marriage* does not offer readers a simple picture of Providence. Haywood refers frequently to fate, fortune, providence, destiny or the workings of heaven—words and phrases that occur at least 14 times. The narrator blames "the dark Decrees of *Fate*" that "cannot be foreseen by *Human* Penetration" (107). Maraphill inisists Mirtamene is "a Blessing sent from Heaven" who is "thrown by Providence into [Bellcour's] Arms" (111). Endeared to her rescuer, Mirtamene is pleased to accept the "Man design'd by Heaven for my Husband" (131). Bellcour's failed attempt to escape from his father on their way to Plymouth seems "design'd by Heaven to prevent his forsaking a Father, who had always so tenderly lov'd him" (132). Furthermore, the issue of divine reward and punishment is complicated by the numerous oaths and curses the characters make. Maraphill's curse on Bellcour does come true. Both Alathia and Bellcour "swore together an eternal Fidelity, each wishing the most unheard of Curses on themselves, if ever they were guilty of a breach of it," which also comes to pass (113). Perhaps we are not meant to assume that their disaster is caused by these curses, but the supernatural, eternal oaths made by the characters contrast with their flimsy and easily discarded earthly promises. Maraphill turns against Alathia's father on a whim. Bellcour commits bigamy because he knows his marriage, although legal, cannot be proved. And he feels more confident because Alathia signed a contract

releasing him from his obligations, although only Heaven could release him from his vow. The curses also highlight the changeable nature of man and his fate. Maraphill curses his son down into hell, but his feelings change; after Bellcour's death, he is "oppressed with grief" and dies soon after. Bellcour swears his feelings for Alathia will never change, but they do. The story seems to mock the notion of effective personal agency, suggesting instead that man must still obey heaven. When Bellcour taints the sacrament of marriage, he is punished, like the hero of a great tragedy.

The Incest Threat: *The Mercenary Lover*

In *The Double Marriage* Haywood suggested that ambition in the marriage market leads to bigamy; In *The Mercenary Lover; or The Unfortunate Heiresses* (1726) she entertains the possibility that it could also lead to murder. Her "citizen" is a "trader" who marries an heiress. But he is not content with her fortune and must also have her sister's portion. He seduces the sister and then, when her pregnancy threatens to expose him, poisons her. Although the victim accuses him, he persuades the public that she was insane and escapes punishment. *The Mercenary Lover* has been called "anomalous" and "shocking" even among Haywood's most scandalous works (Burgess, 393; Backscheider, "Introduction," xxxvii). The pathology of the fortune hunter resembles that of the libertine: for the former, a woman exists to enrich a man; for the latter, a woman exists to give a man pleasure. Haywood's seducer/murderer shows that the lusts of the two are analogous, and both create calamities for women.

Like Haywood's libertines, the protagonist Clitander is deceitful. Ironically, his aim is not seduction, but marriage. He pursues a wealthy heiress, Miranda, in a small town outside London. He, "tho' of no higher Rank than a Trader, had a Paternal Estate,

which, together with his great Business, made his Fortune an equivolent with that of *Miranda*" (125). His courtship of Miranda inspires her with love, and once he perceives her vulnerability, he proceeds with real aggression: "redoubling his Attacks, [he] prest her in a Manner so undeniable, that he not only obtain'd a Promise of Marriage, but also saw, that as one Step towards the Performance of it, she banish'd all others who made Professions of the same Nature his was, from her House" (125). Clitander's enthusiasm for marriage takes on the usual terminology of seduction in his "attacks" and "pressings." Instead of her body, however, he lusts after her money. Miranda's "trader" is already a "traitor" to her by pursuing another mistress.

Clitander's outward presentation succeeds in convincing not only his bride but the whole community. He "appear'd the most indulging Husband" and they were held to be "the most exemplary Patterns of Conjugal Affection" (126). But things are not what they seem:

> If a long Series of continu'd Courtship, if Longings, Ardours, and Impatiencies before Possession, cou'd denote a true and perfect Passion, if the most eager Transports, oft repeated Vows, and tender Pressures afterwards, might evince the Person faithful, *Clitander* had been the most enamour'd and most constant Man on Earth, and *Miranda* been as Blest in *Reality*, as he was now in *Imagination*. But his was not a Soul capable of being touch'd with the Charms wither of the Body or the Mind; Beauty, Virtue, or good Humour, he look'd on as Things indifferent, and not at all essential to the Happiness of Life,—Money was the only *Darling* of his mercenary Wishes. (126)

Everything that seems to demonstrate true love can be feigned, and outward action cannot reveal inner thoughts. Paying court to Miranda, he was pursuing his true love—money.

Having obtained both a fortune and a devoted wife, one would expect Clitander to be satisfied. But his lust for money is insatiable. Once he obtains Miranda's fortune, half her father's estate, Clitander longs to own the other half, too. If Miranda's sister does not

marry, his wife will inherit her portion. Althea, the older sister, more serious and reserved than Miranda, has said she is "averse" to marriage (127). But Clitander pursues her anyway, seeking a firmer renunciation. Although she makes him the promises he desires, "all was not sufficient to content him" and "he could not be easy when he reflected that there was any thing in the Power of Fate which cou'd put a Bar to his avaritious Views" (127). Clitander considers various ways of getting control of Althea's fortune, including marrying her to a dupe or kidnapping her and shipping her overseas, but rejects these options because they entail a certain danger of being discovered. Clitander wants a plan where he does not depend on confederates who might expose him. Finally, the "stratagem" comes to him through the convenient mechanism of his own lust. His lust for money conflates with sexual lust, and he plots to seduce Althea. "With strong and vehement Desires he burn'd to enjoy her, and when in *Miranda's* Arms, languished to rifle the untasted loveliness of her beauteous Sister.—He plotted, therefore, how first to satiate this Passion, which, once obtain'd, he thought would be the most effectual Means to gratify the other also" (129). Pretending to be her devoted brother, Clitander persuades her to accept his libertine rhetoric; Haywood calls it a "posion":

> little by little the Poison of his Infectious Precepts gain'd Ground on her Belief; and finding herself wholly incapable of defending the Cause of Virtue against those Arguments which his superior Wit and Genius brought, began to think, indeed, that what he said was just and that those Laws which prohibited a free Commerce between the Sexes; were only the Boundaries of Policy, invented to keep Mankind in Awe, and restrain the Sallies of Nature. (131)

Clitander, "fierce animated" by his desire (134), pursues Althea relentlessly until he overpowers her resistance and "incapable of Defense, half yielding, half reluctant . . . [he] perpetrated the cruel Purpose he had long since contriv'd" (135). Possessing her

body does not long satisfy him as a substitute for possessing her money. He "remain'd but a short Time contented with the Triumph he had gain'd, the Love of Money now resum'd its Empire in his sordid Soul; and as it was not so much the Possession of Althea's Person as her Estate, which had induc'd him to take this Pains, so having obtain'd the one, he now began to set his whole Wits at Work to become Master of the other also" (137).

At the same time, Clitander discovers that his plot may be revealed by an unexpected confederate—Althea is pregnant. Clitander now contrives to obtain Althea's fortune through legal mechanisms. Insinuating that she will die in childbirth, he reminds her that her fortune will go to her sister, not her child. But Althea protests that there is no way to will an estate to an unnamed child. Clitander's plan is that she make him trustee:

> you shall bequeath your Lands, your Money, Jewels, and whatsoever valuable Goods you have to a fictitious Person—we may easily invent a Name;—and because it may be expected he should appear to claim the benefit of the Will, I must be left *Trustee*, or if you please, his *Guardian*, and your *Executor*, by this Means I shall have the Opportunity of doing Justice to my Child, since being myself, in Right of my Wife, next Heir, none has the Privilege to scrutinize into the Reasons of your having made so seemingly strange a *Will*. (139)

His real plan is to kill Althea before her pregnancy becomes known and make it look like suicide. Since a suicide's estate is forfeit to the government, he means to trick Althea into signing a Deed of Gift to him, rather than a will. Haywood emphasizes his duplicity with the legal language: he absolutely cannot be *trust*ed, will not *guard* his child, and is more of an *executioner* than *executor*. Like a hot-blooded libertine, he with "indefatigable Industry" and "burning with a yet unextinguish'd Passion for the Enjoyment of her Wealth" finds an attorney to produce the document. But his plan goes awry when Althea wants to read the document before signing it. Offering to read it to her

instead, he makes her suspicious by attempting to conceal the paper from her. Suddenly, "her eyes unsealed," the gullible Althea realizes he is lying to her (142). She grabs the document and throws it into the fire. Clitander stands speechless for some moments, but then attempts to reassure her. She is now convinced that he has lied to her all along, and refuses to listen to his excuses.

Althea decides to leave the next morning and go to their country house. Although she tells Miranda nothing, Clitander still fears exposure. He writes that the title of the instrument was changed according to the advice of the attorney, and begs her to forgive him. Still in love with Clitander, her anger softens, but she warns him she does not want a Reconciliation, "at least, as yet" (150). Certain now that she will capitulate, he urges her to attend her sister's birthday party. She returns home for it and Clitander poisons her drink. When she leaves the party she becomes ill and stops at an apothecary, who immediately recognizes the sign of poison and sends for a doctor. He tells her she will die, and "she cry'd aloud, that all in the House were Witnesses of the Exclamations, 'Then I am poisoned by *Clitander*, that murderous Villian has kill'd both the Life and Honour of the lost Althea:—Oh! I am doubly damn'd first by the Crime he drew me to commit, and next by my Knowledge to what a Monster I have sacrific'd my Virtue'" (156).

The doctor summons Miranda and she learns the details of her sister's death. She agrees to an autopsy, "still hoping the Surgeons who perform'd that Operation, might find some Other cause than poison for her Death" (158). The autopsy not only confirms that Alathea was poisoned, but also reveals she was six months' pregnant. Miranda still hopes "that her Husband might be wrong'd, and that in Spite of what the Deceas'd had declar'd, some other Man might have been the father of the Child, and Author of this

double Murder" (158). But when Althea's pocketbook is given to her, Miranda discovers Clitander's letters. She decides against prosecuting him because she still loves him, but decides for the "just Care of her own future Safety" not to live with a "Monster who she now found would scruple nothing" (160). In a letter she informs Clitander that Althea accused him before she died to a roomful of witnesses, "too many, for you, I fear, to escape the Punishment your Guilt deserves" (160).

What makes this novel both so unusual and so shocking is that Clitander does, in fact, escape the punishment he deserves. And he does that by manipulating public opinion. Clitander employs a friend to go to those who heard Althea's accusation and tell them

> they ought not to judge by Appearances; that in Case *Clitander* were guilty, there was no Possibility of proving him so, the Lady who had accus'd him having been Lunatick for some time before her Death; and besides it was wholly inconsistent with Reason to believe him both her Lover and her Poisoner; it seemed more probable, that being with Child, to conceal her Shame she had taken something to destroy it, which had work'd an Effect contrary to what she design'd, than that it should be given her by any other Person. And concluded these Arguments with a Remonstrance, that to go about to prosecute a Man for a Crime, of which at most he cou'd but be suppos'd guilty, wou'd only involve the Persons who did it, in a great deal of Trouble, and be of no Service either to restore the Life, or revenge the Death of the Person for whose Sake they undertook it. (161)

Like the villain in *The Distress'd Orphan,* Clitander alleges madness against Althea, and she is unable to defend herself. And unlike the happy unity of the community in the earlier story, Clitander here successfully influences public opinion for his benefit. He plants doubt in peoples' minds, and they become indifferent to the outcome. The diversity of the town creates an apathy about justice: "everyone having Business which was more his own, join'd to make the Ghost of this wrong'd Lady remain yet unappeas'd,

and the wicked Clitander triumph in the Belief, That neither Heaven nor Earth will take any further Notice of his Crimes" (162). Astonishingly, no one arrests Clitander.

Miranda, who possesses the "undeniable witness of his guilt," remains his only fear. And the only punishment he suffers is the "perpetual Rack upon his Spirits" created by his apprehensions and "that Bitterness of Soul" from his failure to profit from the murder. Thus, Clitander suffers a modern punishment of conscience, rather than the more visible and reassuring punishments of Providence. "While *here*, he suffers Taste of the Bitterness of Soul, which in greater Abundance he must *hereafter* swallow to all Eternity," the narrator reassures us; Clitander will be forced to his own poison in the next life. Haywood's ending is extremely pessimistic in this regard; not only has the divine mechanism for punishment ceased, human justice has also failed. The ambivalent ending may be an indication that Haywood is coming to accept the secularism of her age.

Conclusion

The four novels considered here were all published in 1726. It is my contention that, after experimenting in allegorical political fiction in *Memoirs of a Certain Island*, Haywood becomes more interested in the status of women in society and begins to write novels that expose the social and political injustices women had to endure. These four texts show a distinct interest in how the law and the economy disempower women. In the next chapter, I will show that in *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, Haywood's views had developed into what we might call a modern feminist awareness that all women share political interests because of their gender.

CHAPTER FOUR
"IT WOULD HAVE BEEN AN INJUSTICE NOT ONLY TO HERSELF, BUT TO ALL WIVES IN GENERAL": COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

By 1751, the year Eliza Haywood published *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, the literary and cultural landscape in England had changed dramatically. As Franco Moretti's studies have shown, the second wave of significant novel production in England, from 1740-1780, was dominated by male authors (87). Most prominent among them, Samuel Richardson pursued a cultural project to "overwrite" the scandalous, female-authored fictions that dominated novel production in the 1720s. His wildly successful novel, *Pamela; or Virtue Rewarded* (1740), set new standards. Stylistically, *Pamela* surprised audiences with its domestic realism; morally it delighted with the figure of an incorruptibly chaste servant maid who defends herself from her rakish master and, eventually, is rewarded when he reforms and marries her. Richardson's vision confidently promotes the bourgeois ideology of happy domesticity and personal merit.

Although she now had to compete in a market dominated by men, Eliza Haywood continued to write; she was the only novelist from the 1720s to do so. *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* demonstrates her mature powers as a novelist and a social critic. Haywood resists the attempt to silence the sexual protests of the earlier form she pioneered. Instead, she demonstrates how bourgeois domestic realism could be used to challenge cultural norms and expose the hypocrisy and instability of new social codes. She is one of the first novelists to depict marriage unfavorably and to show how masculine privilege and the double standard authorized violence against women.

Positioned almost equidistant between Mary Astell's *Reflections on Marriage* (1700) and Mary Wollstonecraft's *The Wrongs of Woman; or Maria* (1798), *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* deserves to be acknowledged as both a powerful critique of marriage and a work of proto-feminism that inspired the generation of writers that followed.

The "New Species of Writing"

Traditional literary historians like Ian Watt locate the origin of the fully realized English novel in the 1740s, with the publication of the major works of Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding. Ironically, both of these writers would have disputed Watt's assertion. Since "novels" and "romances" were both terms used to refer to the amatory fictions produced by earlier women writers, especially the successful triumvirate of Aphra Behn, Delarivier Manley and Eliza Haywood, the male writers who dominated the novel market in the 1740s pointedly denied any connection to their female predecessors. According to Dieter Schulz, they did so because "the salient features of the 'novel' before 1740 are sensationalism and erotic sensualism" (90). The eroticism of earlier novels and their association with the scandalous women who wrote them was explicitly rejected by the new male writers in favor of moral didacticism.

In a famous letter to Aaron Hill in January 1741, Samuel Richardson explains his interest in writing novels:

> I thought the story if written in an easy and natural manner, suitable to the simplicity to it, might possibly introduce a new species of writing, that might possibly turn young people into a course of reading far different from the pomp and parade of romance-writing, and dismissing the improbable and the marvelous, with which novels generally abound, might tend to promote the cause of religion and virtue. (*Selected Letters* 41)

Richardson's disdain for the romance, which he implies does not teach religion or virtue, would shape a generation of novelists. Both he and Fielding declared that they were not writing novels, but creating a new literary form that could be morally instructive.

William B. Warner argues that the "cultural strife" around novel reading resulted from the novel's status as a mass entertainment that threatened traditional hierarchies and class distinctions. He denies that the "novels of amorous intrigue" were written specifically for women, but he acknowledges that part of the opposition to novel reading stems from the assumption that weak minded women, who "easily receive impressions," will "act out" what they read by "having sex" (141). Thus, when writers like Richardson attack the novel's threat to religion and virtue, Warner assumes that the main threat is the amatory novel's depiction of sex. Richardson and Fielding seek to replace these novels with their own culturally elevated fictions; in Warner's words, they "overwrite" the novels that came before, even though their attempt to do so does not successfully efface these intertexts.

Certainly Richardson did object to the novel's depiction of sex. But I think Warner oversimplifies the reaction of male writers to the earlier female novelists. Writers like Haywood challenged the ideological agenda of the middle class. Her novels do not show responsible patriarchs protecting their female dependents, or honorable merchants cherishing their wives. Instead, she depicts men as unscrupulous predators who destroy women as they pursue their own self-interest. Richardson's avowed purpose—to make the novel serve religion and virtue—does not just mean giving the novel a PG rating. It means that the novel must actively promote middle-class morality and gender ideology.

In other words, Richardson and Fielding also rejected Haywood's social protests and her indictment of gender inequality.

Richardson would shape the fiction of his generation with two blockbusters: *Pamela; or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) and *Clarissa; or, The History of a Young Lady* (1748). The inimitable female protagonists of both novels became touchstones for new ideas about female virtue and proper behavior. "The appearance of *Pamela*," Ian Watt explains,

> marks a very notable epiphany in the history of our culture: the emergence of a new, fully developed and immensely influential stereotype of the feminine role . . . the model heroine must be very young, very inexperienced, and so delicate in physical and mental constitution that she faints at any sexual advance; essentially passive, she is devoid of any feelings towards her admirer until the marriage knot is tied. (161)

Female virtue was thus defined primarily as sexual chastity and passivity. In *Pamela*, the servant-maid heroine is rewarded for her unwavering sexual continence with marriage to a gentleman that brings her higher social status, or, as Richardson himself phrased it in his continuation, an "exalted condition." While the repeated attacks on Pamela's body constitute the bulk of volume one, the other three volumes model Pamela the perfect housewife. First, Mr. B. gives his bride prescriptions for her conduct, and then we see Pamela fulfill these orders. For Nancy Armstrong, Pamela was the avatar of a newly emerging female domestic authority. She writes, "According to the middle-class ideal of love, or what Laurence Stone has called the 'companionate marriage,' the female relinquishes political control to the male in order to acquire exclusive authority over domestic life, emotions, taste, and morality" (41). Thus, Pamela yields complete obedience to her husband, but he learns true morality from her. Armstrong argues that

Pamela initiated an era in which women attained cultural power and authority from their position within the home. Certainly, this is what bourgeois ideology promised women.

However, Roger Folkenflik has strongly opposed Armstrong's claim that Pamela gains power in this novel:

> Rather than representing the rise of female authority, *Pamela* begins with the loss of female authority in the person of Mr. B.'s mother, Pamela's employer and teacher, and it ends with Pamela empowered as a mouthpiece for a reinscribed male authority, precisely the relation she bears to her author as well. Mr. B remains her 'Master.' If Richardson portrays the growth to selfhood sympathetically and celebrates the individuality of Pamela, he nevertheless suggests powerfully that the good wife is in many ways the good servant. (15)

Although Armstrong's argument focuses more on class and the way domestic virtues tended to obscure class distinctions, I agree with Folkenflik that Pamela's authority is inseparable from patriarchal authority.

Richardson's second novel provided an even more spiritually elevated female ideal and an even stronger inscription of patriarchy. The heroine, Clarissa, is "the supreme embodiment of the new feminine stereotype, a very paragon of delicacy" (Watt 225). She is unable to accept the repulsive suitor pushed on her by her family, and rather than be forced to submit, runs away with the rake Lovelace. Despite her excellence, even her moral superiority, she commits a crime in thwarting her father's will. "Both parties are wrong" in this family drama, Ian Watt notes, "the parents in trying to force Solmes on their daughter, and their daughter in entertaining the private addresses of another suitor, and leaving home with him; and both parties are punished" (215). If her father wrongs her, though, Clarissa commits a greater wrong by running away. Her disobedience is an assertion of her will over her father's—a right she does not have in Richardson's

patriarchal vision. Clarissa is punished with death, but also with rape—a punishment specific to her gendered crime and a threat to other rebellious daughters.

Paula Backscheider specifically views Richardson's agenda as a repudiation of the challenges to the patriarchy made by women writers:

> It is my contention . . . that Richardson inscribed the patriarchy approvingly on Clarissa's death, raised the stakes for women in these debates, and left a dangerously mixed legacy for his so-called female imitators. He did extend the discussions of issues of crucial importance to women and the way the novel form could be used to participate in them, but his more important achievement was to modify them. By giving powerful definition, endorsement, and impetus to two hegemonic redefinitions of masculine and feminine, he assured that the novel would become a crucial site, battleground even, for ongoing discussions of cultural issues affecting marriage, the family, and the 'woman question.' ("Rise of Gender" 32)

In other words, Richardson succeeded in his project of reformulating that novel as an entertainment that promotes patriarchal power.

If we seriously consider Moretti's claim that the eighteenth-century novel market was a tug-of-war between waves of female-authored and male-authored novels, we must consider what was at stake in this cultural dispute. The fact that men like Richardson and Fielding specifically separated themselves from women writers demonstrates their own awareness of sexual difference in the two generations of novelists. While their masculine vision dominated the market at mid-century, a few intrepid women writers dared to compete with them. Eliza Haywood's intervention is a direct challenge to their portrayal of patriarchal harmony.

Exemplary Characters and Mixed Messages

Women writers responded differently to the innovations of Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and the new generation of male novelists. Fielding is generally credited with

developing the “masculine” vision of the novel: the story of an imperfect hero’s development, told with irony and comic effect, that sometimes treated subjects considered indecent, especially sexuality. Richardson, on the other hand, came to represent the “feminine” aspect of the midcentury novel. His “concentration on female characters and feeling, and his exemplary morality, meant that he wrote as women were ideally supposed to write” (Spencer 90). Women writers, in general, found it safer to follow in Richardson’s footsteps.

Surprisingly, this new model did not always hinder authors from challenging it. In her study of the use of exemplary fiction by eighteenth-century women writers, Eve Tavor Bannet found that the new moral novel, rather than suppressing emerging feminism, was manipulated by writers to promote non-normative ideas about women. “The function of exemplary narratives,” Bannet writes, “was not to reflect social practices but to intervene in practice by offering a constructed or embodied ideal” (Bannet 61). The ideal was meant to teach by offering a *contrast* to actual practice. Women novelists realized that exemplary fiction thus offered new possibilities. “Women novelists could exemplify their ideas about other possible characters for women and other possible lives, and rewrite familiar relations in accordance with their desire” Bannet argues, “They could also make their patterns of excellence serve as a standard against which the failings of society and of family life were judged” (65). Sarah Fielding’s David Simple, for example, is an exemplary figure whose virtues tend to highlight the faults of more ordinary men.

The exemplary novel ironically offered additional subversive possibilities. The problem with examples, as the *Pamela* controversy shows, is that the meaning of an

example can be unstable. Discovered through induction, one example can be interpreted in multiple ways (Bannet 65). Bannet argues that women writers purposely exploited this instability. The group she calls "Matriarchs" wrote stories where simple moral equations did not add up: for instance, a good character might die before finding happiness. Bannet writes, "Matriarchs . . . would allow the possible meanings arising from 'the agreement or disagreement of ideas' to exceed any moral or interpretation offered in the story. In this way, the most proper of exemplary narratives could be written double-voiced, to disprove the evidence of its own example and seem more conventional than it was" (68). Thus, writers found ways to critique the growing sentimental moral regime from within. Eliza Haywood, too, exploited this possibility in her own writing.

The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless

The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless has long been considered Haywood's best novel. It is the story of a willfully independent and naïve young coquette, whose "thoughtless" behavior causes her to lose the respect of her most worthy suitor. She marries the wrong man and endures a humiliating marriage, whereby she finally learns proper behavior and a love of virtue. In the end, she is rewarded with the death of her unlovable husband and the hand in marriage of her former suitor and true love.

In October 1751, Ralph Griffith's *Monthly Review* gave *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* a lukewarm review calling it:

> the history of an inconsiderate girl, whose little foibles, without any natural vices of mind, involve her in difficulties and distresses, which, by correcting, make her wiser and deservedly happy in the end. A heroine like this cannot but lay an author under much disadvantage; for, tho such an example may afford lessons of prudence, yet how can we greatly interest ourselves in the fortune of one, whose character and conduct are neither truly amiable nor infamous, and which we can neither admire, nor love, nor pity, nor be diverted with? (394)

Griffiths puts his finger on a problem Haywood no doubt struggled with: how could she create a flawed female character that her culture's inflexible standards could still accept as virtuous? Betsy must already be virtuous in order to be an acceptable heroine, so her development must occur only in minor matters. Haywood seems to owe a debt to Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749), in which an essentially good but flawed hero is comically reformed and rewarded with marriage to the woman he loves. "A female Tom Jones, however," Jane Spencer notes, "could not be allowed his sexual adventures if she was to be the heroine of any but a totally immoral novel; and if 'vices' were avoided and only 'foibles' remained, the novel seemed to be left without a strong focus of interest" (140). More important for Haywood than recreating Tom's sexual experience was depicting a female character capable of moral growth. "*Betsy Thoughtless* and novels like it brought about a crucial shift in the novel's presentation of women, from the stasis of perfection or villainy to the dynamics of character change," Spencer writes. In this way, *Betsy Thoughtless* rejects Richardson's identification of virtue with sexual chastity. Betsy never wavers from defending her chastity. She improves as a character because she learns the true value of virtue: self-respect. As Spencer elaborates: "[Haywood's] emphasis on the need for self-respect is a feature of other novels about the heroine's reform, and tends to qualify their message of conformity. The heroine who cares for the reality of virtue for her own sake finds herself in conflict with a society that cares mainly for the appearance of it" (150).

In the twentieth century, this book was received ambivalently. George Whicher admits that in this novel Haywood "reached the full fruition of her powers as a novelist," but he also damns it with false praise by classifying it as "domestic fiction," or "a realist

piece of fiction in which the heroine serves as chief protagonist, and which can be read with a cup of tea in one hand without danger of spilling tea" (158; 162). The apparently conservative message of the book—which seems to punish Betsy for her independence—did not charm early feminist critics, either. "Haywood's earlier feminist protest has been lost in her recreation of herself as a new 'moral' novelist," Jane Spencer writes. "Haywood accepts the double standard she had attacked in her earlier work" (149). Mary Anne Schofield views Haywood's later novels as endorsing dull conformity. "In the novels of the 1740s and 1750s," she writes, "Haywood preaches domestic and social order and tranquility" (*Quiet Rebellion* 110). Lorna Beth Ellis, however, views the novel's propriety as a reflection of an increasingly restrictive society: "*Betsy Thoughtless*, one of Haywood's new 'domestic' novels, may be seen as the author's model for how a young woman can negotiate an increasingly repressive society that denies women the freedom and power they had when Haywood began her career" (296). In other words, it may be society, rather than Haywood herself, that has become more conservative.

As scholars began to recognize that the seemingly conservative domestic novels of the eighteenth-century could be read as "double-voiced," the opinion of *Betsy Thoughtless* began to change. Most readings now acknowledge Haywood's "subversive didacticism." Although Haywood's narrator assumes the position of the conduct book advisor, the story seems to contest her advice. For instance, the marital advice dispensed by Betsy's advisor Lady Trusty is completely ineffective in improving Betsy's marriage (Stuart). Thus, while the text seems to affirm the commonplaces of eighteenth-century discussions of women's virtue, readers are forced to acknowledge conflicting ideas and evidence. As Deborah Nestor puts it, "[Haywood's] adherence to conventional bourgeois

morality applies only to the surface of the text" ("Virtue" 579). Indeed, while the plot shows that virtue is rewarded and vice punished, Haywood pursues her earlier commitments to exposing social injustice. Haywood skeptically compares marriage and prostitution, virtuous and fallen women, and honorable gentlemen and libertines. In the story of Betsy's battered reputation, Haywood shows the brutality of a social system that so closely policed women's behavior that even a small misstep could lead to social ostracism. By mixing "good" and "bad" women, Haywood attempts to overcome the binary dualism that divides women into two, and only two, categories: virgin and whore. In Haywood's treatment, the unsettling similarities between women of the two classes demonstrate the instability of the categories themselves.

The Double Standard

Spencer is right that Haywood "accepts" the reality of the double standard—but she does not condone it. In fact, the narrative consistently lays bare the injustices of the double standard and demonstrates how it justifies violence against women. Betsy's life is contrasted with those of her brothers and her suitor Mr. Trueworth's, revealing how limited her freedoms are compared to theirs. Education is the first disparity. Her brother Francis attends Oxford University and her brother Thomas is on a grand tour of Europe when Betsy is placed in a girls' school by her father, and was "never suffered . . . to come home" (27). Upon the death of her father, Betsy's guardian, Mr. Goodman, withdraws her from school. She is "just entering into her fourteenth year," but she immediately becomes sexualized, as she entertains suitors and her guardian encourages her to choose a husband. Thus, when Betsy enters the marriage market, she is both uneducated and unworldly.

Throughout the narrative, Betsy is chastised for too freely enjoying the "innocent pleasures of the town" (384), but her brothers can pursue their more immoral pleasures without recrimination. Thomas brings his French mistress to London and lodges her in his house. This decision makes it impossible for Betsy to move in with him at the moment she most needs to leave the Goodman house; Betsy is forced to take rooms of her own and live alone instead. Francis, however, can visit his brother as often as he likes, since "his reputation would suffer nothing by being under the roof with the mistress of his brother's amorous inclinations" (333). And Thomas rejects Goodman's criticism of his manner of living. After hearing his deathbed admonition to leave his mistress and take a wife, Thomas judges that "[Goodman] had talked like an old man, and that it was time enough for him to part with his pleasures, when he no longer had any inclination to pursue them" (227). Even Trueworth indulges himself in an affair with Miss Flora, something that is "no more than any man, of his age and constitution would have done" (367-68). Yet when Trueworth suspects that Betsy has had an illicit affair and given birth to an illegitimate child, he decides, "A marriage with Miss Betsy was, therefore, now quite out of the question" (284).

Haywood connects the sexual double standard with male predatory behavior: it authorizes sexual violence against unprotected women. Since male sexuality is accepted as natural and its expression as a male right, women are constantly threatened. For instance, Miss Forward is only a teenager when she is forcibly fondled by a stranger at a gentleman's house party because she paused to listen to the music and she "must not think to avoid paying the piper after having heard his music" (103). Betsy suffers four

serious rape attempts herself, each of them tacitly understood to be her own fault.[11] They are punishments for her refusal to comport herself according to bourgeois moral standards. In the case of the gentleman-commoner at Oxford, Betsy allows him and his friend to escort her and Flora to a secluded area, and when they test the girls with "two or three kisses on the lips," Betsy and Flora "repulsed the liberties they took in such a manner, as made the offenders imagine they had not sinned beyond a pardon" (70). Their too light rebuke, and their reckless acceptance of the invitation, invites the attack. In the second rape attempt, the gentleman-rake attacks her in his coach because she had been in the company of a prostitute, and he thinks her one too. Her lack of regard to her reputation—her failure to police herself—means that she will be vulnerable. In the third attempt, Sir Frederick Fineer gains the opportunity to attack her because she entertains his acquaintance without looking too far into his background or obtaining her brothers' approval of his courtship. Her failure to seek male protection leads to her victimization by a conartist. And her husband's patron attacks her because she agrees to accompany her husband to his house, even though she knows the man desires her. In each case, it is Betsy's carelessness that is blamed for the assault. The picture Haywood paints is of a punitive social code that uses sexual violence to subdue and control women. It is telling that Haywood's serious depiction of rape differs so strongly from Fielding's comic treatment of the attempt on Fanny in *Joseph Andrews* and his other "rape jokes." Simon Dickie shows in a recent study that Fielding's jests about rape in his fiction writing ominously correspond to the attitude of his judicial writing, in which he manifests "habitual" skepticism of the testimony of rape victims (586). This difference in itself

[11] Betsy is not to blame in the sense that in each case it is clear that the assailant is a predator and that Betsy genuinely, if naively, resists. Betsy (and perhaps Haywood, too) recognizes that her unwary behavior gave her attackers their opportunities.

demonstrates one way in which Haywood's novel challenged the patriarchal standards of the new novelists.

Even when Betsy is not threatened with rape, Haywood reminds us that the relationships between the sexes are infused with violence. In addition to the violence of attempted rape, three duels are fought over Betsy. These duels pit competing men against each other, but the blame implicitly falls on Betsy, the pretext. The first is her brother's duel with the gentleman-commoner that wounds both men, gets Francis expelled, and destroys Betsy's reputation with polite society in Oxford. In the second, Staple and Trueworth fight over Betsy. When neither man can gain the advantage in their pursuit of Betsy, Staple challenges Trueworth. "It is fit . . . the sword should decide the difference between us" Staple writes to Trueworth (167). At the duel, he declares, "'Miss Betsy Thoughtless be the victor's prize'" (170). Unable to win Betsy's preference, Staple attempts to gain his point by eliminating Trueworth. The lady's consent is not even necessary. Though Betsy does not even know about the duel, Mr. Goodman blames "'those murdering eyes of yours'" for the men's wounds (175). Again, socially disruptive violence is shown to be a woman's fault. The language of the duel is also translated to the scene of seduction. Miss Forward recounts that when she and her schoolmistress propose a meeting with their lovers, Mr. Wildly declares, "'If Sir John accepts the challenge, I will be his second'" (114). And when Flora issues a "challenge" to Trueworth as "Incognita," he answers his "antagonist": "I dare encounter a fine woman at any weapon" (306). Alone with the Incognita who insists on hiding her face, Trueworth says, "'your neck, your breasts are free, and those I will be revenged upon'" (311). The lover's

language demonstrates that just as women inspire violence between men, they also invite violence to themselves.

Betsy, too, understands that courtship and marriage are power games. Betsy's vanity enjoys the endless praise and flattery of courtship, but she also relishes the power it gives her over men. She is a "tyrant," who pursues "victory" and "triumph" (196, 231). Betsy eyes the "victim of her charms" and is happy with her "conquest," which is owing to "the power of her beauty" (37, 39). In fact "she triumphed in the pains she gave," the narrator recounts, as do "ladies of this cast" who "value themselves on the number and quality of their lovers, as they do upon the number and quality of their cloaths, because it makes them of consideration in the world" (142). Through coquetry, Betsy seeks public recognition and social power, two things explicitly denied to women by domestic ideology. Likewise, when she considers Sir Frederick Fineer, she thinks, "'the addresses of a man of rank will make me of some consideration in the world'" (321). In contrast to the repeated assaults that demonstrate Betsy's powerlessness, she still aspires to control men: "As the barometer, said she to herself, is governed by the weather, so is the man in love governed by the woman he admires: he is a meer machine,—acts nothing of himself,—has no will or power of his own, but is lifted up, or depressed just as the charmer of his heart is in humour" (101). In defiance of social expectations that she should be meek and subservient, Betsy wants to experience the kind of power men possess—the power to control others. Flora calls her "the perfect Machiavel in love affairs," and Mr. Goodman admits, she "would have made a rare minster of state" (131, 136).

Betsy's pursuit of power through coquetry triggers overly anxious responses in the other characters. Her brothers and her guardians do not understand her aversion to marriage because they anticipate the benefits—to Betsy and to themselves—of an advantageous match. Mr. Goodman, the businessman, disapproves of Betsy's stalling. "'I do not understand this way of making gentlemen lose their time,'" he remarks (125). For Goodman, as well as for Captain Hysom, marriage is "business" and for Hysom, it is "'business that requires dispatch'" (139). Within several days of meeting him, he insists Betsy accept his proposal. She maintains her right to make her decision at her leisure, whether it wastes his time or not. Her refusal to choose a husband makes Goodman fret that she may lose her market value: "'I only wish she may not, as the old saying is, out-stand her market'" (135). Betsy does not share Goodman's anxiety, and thinks she should not have to accept any of the first offers made to her. She tells him, "it seemed strange to her, that a young woman who had her fortune to make might not be allowed to hear all the different proposals should be offered to her on that score" (127).

But a proper woman cannot choose the best offer from among a plurality of men: it too much resembles the transactions of a prostitute. Mr. Goodman warns Thomas that his mistress will never be a frugal housekeeper, since "'it is the interest of a mistress to sell her favours as dear as she can, and to make the best provision she can for herself'" (336). Betsy's desire to see what her best offer may be before accepting any reveals the similarities between the "business" of courtship and other kinds of business. Indeed, the coquette violates patriarchal demands that a woman belong solely to one man. A coquette belongs to many men, and at the same time to none, since she remains chaste and resists submitting to any one man's authority. A coquette also offends against bourgeois

ideology by ignoring a man's personal merit. Betsy is guilty of this when she is more concerned with pleasing herself more than rewarding the deserving:

> Miss Betsy . . . wished nothing beyond what she enjoyed, the pleasure of being told she was very handsome, and gallanted about by a great number of those who go by the name of very pretty fellows. Pleased with the praise, she regarded not the condition or merits of the praiser, and suffered herself to be treated, presented, and squired to all public places, either by the rake, the man of honour, the wit, or the fool, the married as well as the unmarried, without the least distinction, just as either fell in her way. (56)

Betsy sees all men as capable of giving her pleasure: it is another way that coquetry is linked to prostitution. Mademoiselle de Roquelair, Thomas's disloyal mistress, is similarly unable to make distinctions based on merit: "She loved variety,—she longed for change, without consulting whether the object was suitable or not,—the mercer had a person and an address agreeable enough" (578). And Miss Forward, like Miss Betsy, wants as many admirers as she can have: "Miss Forward could not content herself with the embraces, nor allowance of her keeper, but received both the presents and caresses of as many as she had charms to attract" (226).

The figure of the coquette was reviled in popular periodicals like *The Spectator*, in conduct books and in novels. She is a threatening figure, because she is "verbally and sexually aggressive rather than acquiescent, active rather than subordinate, victor rather than vanquished" (King and Schlick 21). By seizing male privilege, she threatened social order, and an important part of that social order was the economics of marriage. Christopher Flint notes, "Betsy's actions throughout the first half of the narrative upset the economic precepts of courtship, especially as they encourage 'plurality' as opposed to monogamy, in romantic affairs" (216). Thus, coquetry "threatens the stability of an emergent bourgeois morality" (King and Schlick, 21). Betsy's power grab is a threat to

social order, and social disorder follows. Her final catastrophe is the near forced-marriage and loss of her fortune to a conman—a cruel parody of the bourgeois companionate marriage. Mary Anne Schofield remarks, “Betsy Thoughtless, like every heroine before her, wants power. Her initial mistakes are precipitated because of her undisguised search for and desire for control and power. From the feminist standpoint, what Betsy Thoughtless has to learn is not how to still want power but how to gain it subversively” (*Masking* 102). In this book, Haywood shows that the ways for a woman to achieve limited power was through achieving an independence of mind that made it possible for her to recognize her true interests.

The Threat of Ostracism

The problem of Betsy’s reputation further demonstrates the oppressive power of the double standard and bourgeois ideology. Apparently, policing female chastity had become so important by mid-century that a woman could be ostracized—a social death—for merely acquiring a suspect reputation. Whenever her brothers complain of her conduct, Betsy defends herself: she is not guilty of one unvirtuous action. But her virtue is not the point, her brother informs her: “‘What avails you being virtuous?’ said Mr. Francis:—‘I hope,—and believe you are so;—but your reputation is of more consequence to your family:—the loss of the one might be concealed, but a blemish on the other brings certain infamy and disgrace on yourself and all belonging to you’” (384). He continues, “‘a woman brings less dishonour upon a family, by twenty private sins, than by one public indiscretion’” (384). Betsy must learn that, no matter how virtuous she really is, it is just as important to society for her to *appear* virtuous, because appearances are more

important for her social success In addition, it is reputation, not virtue, which is available for the use of a woman's family.

The possible loss of reputation is presented as a catastrophe. Trueworth warns Betsy of the dire social punishment she will endure: "'reputation in [women] once lost, is never to be retrieved'" (232). Mr. Goodman admonishes her that "'reputation is also of some value; that the honour of a young maid like you, is a flower of so tender and delicate a nature, that the least breath of scandal withers and destroys it'" (174). Lady Trusty writes that vigilance may not even be enough to protect her virtue: "there are so many instances of the strictest caution not being always a sufficient security against the snares laid for our destruction, that I look on it as half a miracle, when a young woman, handsome, and exposed as you are, escapes unprejudiced, either in her virtue or reputation" (207). The threat of losing her good reputation is dire, and even with "the strictest caution" it is constantly in danger. In other words, it is beyond a woman's control; it necessitates a male protector. According to Ellis, Betsy's rebellion against these standards manifests her alienation "from a society that defines women through their families and leaves them legally and socially powerless as individuals. In this value system, men determined their worth according to their internal qualities, but a woman's worth is determined by those around her on the basis of the appearance she presents" (292).

Given this reality, we might expect Haywood to protect Betsy from bad company. David Oakleaf, however, points out the very opposite: "No other important novel of the mid-eighteenth century, certainly none written by a woman, associates its heroine as closely with whores as *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*" (107). In fact, the

heroine's name has been confused with that of Betty Careless, a well-known London prostitute of whom Haywood would certainly have been aware. Oakleaf wonders why Haywood "deliberately chose a title that invites readers to associate the name of the heroine with the name of a whore" (113). And the presence of prostitution and sexual immorality goes beyond the heroine's name. Betsy lives with two fallen women, Lady Mellasin and Flora. She is a friend of Miss Forward, a kept mistress. She even offers her protection to her brother's mistress, Mademoiselle de Roquelair. She does indeed associate with unchaste women.[12] Oakleaf answers his own question by claiming that part of Betsy's education is learning how fragile her reputation is—how easily she might be mistaken for a whore (121). When she appears with Miss Forward at the theater, notably, Betsy is attacked by a rake who assumes she is a prostitute. He warns her, "a young lady more endangered her reputation, by an acquaintance with one woman of ill fame, than by receiving the visits of twenty men, though professed libertines" (241). Why should this be so? Libertines possessed male privilege and their sexuality was accepted as natural. A woman who expressed her sexuality, however, becomes a contamination threat. Her pollution may infect other women. The society's neurotic obsession with female chastity insists on zero contact between "good" women and "bad" ones.

Given these prejudices, it is doubly remarkable that Haywood brings her chaste heroine into contact with so many dangerous women. Furthermore, Betsy is not completely unlike them, but shares some of their failings. When Flora has a tryst with a man Betsy rejected, "[Betsy] saw, as in a mirror, her own late follies in those of Miss Flora, who swelled with all the pride of flattered vanity" (45). Miss Forward is seduced

[12] I obviously disagree here with Spencer, who claims "the firm separation of the chaste heroine from the fallen woman is only one of many indications that in this novel Haywood is supporting her society's standards for female conduct" (149).

when she believes, like Betsy, that she controls her lovers: "'I apprehended nothing ill of a man who adored me, and of whose actions I foolishly imagined I had sole command'" (106). In the case of Mademoiselle de Roquelair, she and Betsy actually switch places. The French woman becomes Mr. Munden's lover, lodged in his house, and Betsy moves in with her brother and assumes direction of his household, just as Roquelair had done, when she lived "as his wife in all respects except the name" (277). By forcing readers to acknowledge similarities between a chaste woman and an unchaste one, Haywood overcomes the binary dualism imposed on women. And Haywood suggests that in a world where a small misstep might lead to rape and ruin, the chaste bourgeois woman is closer to her antithesis than she might think. While Haywood's readership may be educated to view themselves as essentially different from the women who become society's castaways, and to view them with contempt, Haywood shows her chaste heroine feeling pity and exercising charity on their behalf. I see this function of Haywood's narrative as an extension of her work of the 1720s, in which she frequently attempted to imagine supportive female communities for unfortunate women. Haywood's text records an increasing restriction on women's behavior and shows how the possibility of female community has been diminished. At the same time, by eliciting her readers' support of Betsy, Haywood overcomes the female isolation within the text with a community of readers united outside the text.

Social Controls

Betsy's power in coquetry is explicitly contrasted to the subservience of a wife in marriage. She knows that, as a coquette, she is free to enjoy the entertainments of London, but as a wife she would have to give up her pleasures:

> She had too much good sense not to know it suited not with the condition of a wife to indulge herself in the gaieties she at present did, which though innocent, and, as she thought, becoming enough in the present state she now was, might not be altogether pleasing to one, who, if he thought proper, had the power of restraining them. In fine, she looked upon a serious behavior as unsuitable to one of her years, and therefore resolved not to enter into a condition which demanded some share of it, at least for a long time; that is, when she should be grown weary of the admiration, flatteries, and addresses of the men, and no longer found any pleasure in seeing herself preferred before all the women of her acquaintance. (93-94)

Betsy repeatedly insists that, regardless of her interest in retaining admirers, she has "'rather an aversion than an inclination'" for marriage (128). Yet her guardians and her brothers persist in recommending potential husbands to her. She is finally persuaded to accept Mr. Munden's offer, something she is completely indifferent to but believes unavoidable because she has carried on the courtship with him too long to turn back without risking her reputation. Considering her own upcoming wedding, she thinks, "'what can make the generality of women so fond of marrying?—It looks to me like an infatuation.—Just as if it were not a greater pleasure to be courted, complimented, admired, and addressed by a number, than be confined to one, who from a slave becomes a master, and perhaps uses his authority in a manner disagreeable enough'" (488). Betsy questions women's acceptance of their own "confinement" under a "master."[13] Juliette Merritt notes that coquetry is thus directly linked to marriage: "As a tactic, coquetry bespeaks a challenge to the oppressive structure of marriage wherein women, as property, must submit to male authority" (181). Fiercely independent herself, Betsy resists losing the only power she has ever had.

[13] Perhaps Haywood was thinking of the way Pamela refers to her husband as her "master."

Marriage, everyone agrees, is the only way to control Betsy. It is not just that she has exposed herself to insults injurious to her reputation. She is altogether too independent. In fact, Betsy may be the only example in an eighteenth-century novel of a single woman, not a widow, who rents her own rooms and sets up a household by herself. She has her own money and is not dependent on any man. Her radical independence and self-reliance constitute a threat to male authority. She must give up her own house, and become a housewife. In addition, Betsy's brothers push marriage because it will free them of responsibility. Their concern is for the trouble she causes for others, namely, themselves: Her brother Francis characteristically declares, "'Oh! What eternal plagues . . . had the vanity of this girl brought upon all her friends?'" (434). The brothers easily decide that "marriage was the only guard for the reputation of a young woman of their sister's temper" (430). Even Lady Trusty "could not but allow that there was a certain vanity in [Betsy's] composition, as dangerous to virtue, as to reputation, and that marriage was the only defence for both" (482). Marriage will get Betsy off the streets and out of the public eye, and it will give her a male guardian who has the moral and legal authority to control her. Flint remarks, "Marriage and family are thus conceived as natural means for persuading women to act in opposition to their desire; in the process, marriage becomes both a regulative institution and a corrective one, and . . . a punitive one" (232). It is not the portrait of marriage promoted by novels like *Pamela*, but it is consistent with Haywood's understanding of gender politics.

Not Always a Happy Ending: Marriage

Betsy's marriage to Munden satisfies her family's desire for Betsy to conform to respectable social behavior. It does not provide the other expected benefits, though, since

it does not absolutely protect her reputation or protect her from sexual assault. The conduct book commonplaces about the happiness of wedlock are certainly exploded in the sad story of Betsy's marriage. Although Betsy does not love Munden, she is determined to fulfill her duty as a wife as cheerfully as she can, according to the conduct book principles supplied by Lady Trusty. The amity between them is short lived, though, when Munden shows his brutish temper. Like Betsy, Munden also understands marriage to be built on power:

> Mr. Munden's notions of marriage had always been extremely unfavourable to the ladies;—he considered a wife no more than an upper servant, bound to study and obey, in all things, the will of him to whom she had given her hand;—and how obsequious and submissive soever he appeared when a lover, had fixed his resolution to render himself absolute master when he became husband. (507)[14]

Just as Betsy had feared, she must submit to a tyrant husband. Their first altercation is over Betsy's housekeeping, a symbol of her financial dependence on her husband. Munden spends money on his own pleasures while denying Betsy sufficient money for the household. He refuses the pin money agreed to in their marriage settlement and insists she economize by giving up her servants. Betsy, however, insists on her rights. Her refusal to "recede from any part of what was her due by contract," infuriates him, and in a display of physical violence, he grabs her pet squirrel and dashes its body against the chimney. He gloats, "'here is one domestic, at least, that may be spared'" (507). Munden's resort to perfectly legal violence shows that contracts are inadequate protections for women's legal rights.

Betsy understands that with this "strangely splenetic and barbarous" act, her husband has now threatened her with physical violence:

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[14] It was a common complaint among women that a man could treat his wife like a servant, but it seems doubly resonant here after the publication of *Pamela*, when servant and wife became one and the same.

> the bloody and inhuman deed being perpetrated by this injurious husband, merely in opposition to his wife, and because he knew it would give her some sort of affliction, was sufficient to convince her, that he took pleasure in giving pain to her, and also made her not doubt but he would stop at nothing for that purpose, provided it were safe, and came within the letter of the law. (509)

In other words, the law allowed a man to use violence against his wife. Lady Trusty dissuades Betsy from thinking of separation, and she and Sir Ralph instead effect a reconciliation between the couple. Soon, however, they have established separate lives; Betsy pursues her "gaiety and love of conversation" in town entertainments, and Munden pursues the women who send "messages and letters, which were daily brought to him by porters" (532). Since "neither offered to interfere with the amusements of the other, nor even pretended to enquire into the nature of them," their marriage is harmonious (532). Haywood debunks the ideal of bourgeois companionship by noting that "however blameable" such an arrangement might be, it "escaped the censure of the generality of mankind, by its being so frequently practiced" (532). In other words, there are far more unhappy marriages than happy ones.

Their truce comes to an end when Betsy refuses the sexual advances of Munden's noble patron. Munden depends on this man's favor for advancement, and loses it when Betsy refuses him. Although the nobleman promises to make her husband's fortune in exchange for her submission, she resists and escapes him. Munden becomes angry with her, and declares, "Tis true, my lord's behavior is not to be justified, nor can yours in regard to me be so; you ought to have considered the dependence I had on him, and not have carried things with so high a hand" (555-56). Munden's response seems equivocal; we cannot know what he might have said if the lord had approached him, especially as the lord assures Betsy, "I could name some husbands, and those of the first rank,

too, …who, to oblige a friend, and for particular reasons, have consented to the complaisance of their wives on this point" (549). This episode shows that men considered their wives as property at their disposal; marriage is so inadequate it may not even protect a woman from prostitution.

Betsy's marriage continues to deteriorate. Munden loses his patron's favor and becomes:

> extremely churlish to his wife:—he looked upon her as the primary cause of his misfortune, cursed his marriage with her, and even hated her for the beauty and good qualities which should have endeared her to him. Nothing she could say, or do, had the power of pleasing him, so that she stood in need of all her courage and fortitude to enable her to support, with any tolerable degree of patience, the usage she received. (562)

Munden's mistreatment of Betsy reaches a nadir as he begins an affair with Mademoiselle de Roquelair, whom Betsy has allowed to lodge at their house. When the Frenchwoman threatens to become a permanent houseguest, Munden refuses Betsy's request that he order her away. Betsy then realizes the two are having an affair and resolves to separate from her husband. She declares, "'Neither divine, nor human laws . . . nor any of those obligations by which I have hitherto looked upon myself as bound, can now compel me any longer to endure the cold neglects, the insults, the tyranny, of this most ungrateful,—most perfidious man'" (590). Betsy packs her bags and leaves his house, going to her brother Thomas.

Betsy's separation from Munden is a very shocking event. *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* is probably the first eighteenth-century novel to portray a marital separation. It is also remarkable in that it portrays Betsy's case sympathetically. Her brother Thomas, formerly so concerned about the family reputation, is apparently unconcerned about the ramifications of a separation:

> her brother had received her in the most affectionate manner,—had approved her conduct in regard to her unfaithful husband,—had assured her of the continuance of his friendship and protection, and before she could request it of him, invited her, and such of her servants as she chose should attend her, to remain in his house as long as she should think fit. (595)

Surprisingly, he is completely ready to support her decision. Likewise, Mabel Loveit, one of the voices of perfect propriety in the book, supports Betsy's decision: "[Mabel] thought that if [Betsy] had acted otherwise, it would have been an injustice not only to herself, but to all wives in general, by setting them an example of submitting to things required of them neither by law nor nature" (595). What is especially odd is that both Betsy and Mabel are quite wrong. From a legal standpoint, Betsy has no grounds for a separation. "Churlish" and adulterous husbands are not illegal. The earlier advice of Lady Trusty, that "all you can accuse him of will not amount to a separation," seems more to the point here. Her lawyer Mr. Markland judges there is "not enough to compel" Munden to a separation (597). Yet both Betsy and Mabel make claims for rights—divine, legal or natural—that do not exist. As Deborah Nestor observes, "The bold assertion of such rights clearly contradicts the passive and modest complaisance defined as proper female behavior" (585). By showing Betsy receiving perfect approbation, Haywood solicits readers to join in a public consensus that separation should be freely allowed when a woman demands it.

Haywood does not pursue this radical plotline, however. Instead, Munden dies before any legal action can be made. Thus, Flint accuses Haywood of lacking courage: "Haywood retreats . . . from the fully radical implications of making her heroine exploit legal resources to shift the balance of domestic power, relying instead on happenstance to resolve marital conflicts" (242). Perhaps Haywood did not believe she could sustain the

reader's belief in a legal victory for Betsy, since such a result could *not* have happened. But by showing genteel approval of Betsy's complaints, she is able to suggest that the courts lag behind public opinion.

Haywood's critique of marriage both echoes that of Mary Astell, who decried the tyranny of husbands and anticipates that of Mary Wollstonecraft, whose writing exposed the law's complicity in that tyranny. Although Betsy's disastrous marriage to Munden is the focus of Haywood's sustained attention, unhappy marriages seem more common in this text than happy ones. The marriage of Mr. Goodman and Lady Mellasin unravels when he learns that she has been taking his money to pay off her lover. Goodman commences an action for divorce, and the text plainly anticipates a legal victory for him. His legal power can only be contrasted to Betsy's corresponding powerlessness. The marriage of his wife's lover, Marplus, is also miserable. Although his wife is a mean, contemptible woman, she complains about husbandly behavior that is very similar to what Betsy will suffer:

> "he kept me poor and mean, as you see;—would not let me have a servant, but made me wash his linen, and do all the drudgery, while he strutted about the town, like a fine fellow, with his tupee wig, and laced waistcoat, and if I made the least complaint, would tell me, in derision, that as I had no children I had nothing else to do but to wait upon him." (262)

The similarity between the situations of both wives—Betsy the middle-class housewife and Mrs. Marplus the lower-class drudge—shows Haywood's growing awareness that women of different classes suffered similar injustices in marriage. We are further reminded of the possibility of violence in marriage when Fineer, after he has forced Betsy into sham vows, attempts to rape her: "'Your resistance is in vain,' cried he, 'you are my wife, and as such I shall enjoy you:—no matter whether you will or not'" (425).

Haywood even interjects this verse from Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* into the family's discussion of her marriage to Munden (483):[15]

> Wedlock without love, some say,
> Is but a lock without a key;
> And 'tis a kind of rape to marry
> One, who neglects, or cares not for ye;
> For what does make it ravishment,
> But being against the mind's consent? (II.i.321-26)

As she does so often, Haywood reminds readers that women are often coerced into marriages that they do not want. Betsy's brothers urged her marriage in order to protect her from rape, but a marriage without a woman's consent still constitutes rape. Furthermore, Haywood's attention to the legal rights afforded husbands, as well as her constant comparison of Betsy with other women, manifests an awareness that women share common political interests because of their gender—a formative development in a feminist consciousness.

Haywood even introduces ambivalent skepticism about the happy marriages. While Sir Ralph and Lady Trusty seem content, and Sir Bazil and Mable Loveit promise to be successful, the seemingly ideal marriage of Trueworth and Harriot Loveit ends in her death. Harriot seems to enjoy every advantage in making an affectionate bourgeois marriage: the protection of responsible family members, a generous dowry, and the perfect suitor. Harriot is "the conduct book model incarnate" (Hultquist 158). Trueworth seems to choose her as a wife because she is in many ways Betsy's opposite: she prefers country solitude and hates London, she is extremely modest and prudent, and, in the decision of marriage, she "yielded to the persuasions of her friends" and accepts Trueworth (401). Yet Harriot, so perfect an example of ideal female virtue, does not live

[15] This chapter's subtitle reads "Is very full of Business."

to enjoy her marriage. "'Scarce three months were elapsed,'" Mabel shockingly tells Betsy, "'from the day which made her a bride, to that which made her a lifeless corpse'" (565). Pregnant, Harriot contracted smallpox. Harriot's death is necessary, of course, if Trueworth is to marry Betsy. But Haywood's cold articulation—"a lifeless corpse"—injects a note of horror. Mabel also reveals that in the early stages of her own newlywed pregnancy she became deathly ill and suffered a miscarriage that "had like proved fatal to me" (566). Mabel's illness cannot be explained as Haywood's mechanism for arranging Betsy's second marriage. Rather, Haywood darkly gestures to the mortal risks all women face in marriage. No matter how advantageously married, no woman is assured of happiness.

It seems, however, that Haywood was not sure how far she could pursue Betsy's separation in the reactionary cultural climate of 1751. Instead, Haywood abandons Betsy's legal claim in order to narrate the sentimental reunion of the spouses through forgiveness. Munden calls Betsy to his deathbed to beg her forgiveness, and she promises not to leave him, although even here her consent is conditional: "'unless your behavior shall convince me you do not desire my stay'" (615). Her loyalty to her marriage and submission to her husband is thus reestablished, and Betsy becomes another domestic heroine who, like Pamela, reforms a bad man through her goodness. The figure of the runaway wife, it seems, was just too incongruous for a didactic novel. As Chris Roulston puts it, "Haywood effectively creates a marriage narrative in which the discourses of private virtue and public justice are on a collision course, exposing the discrepancy between the two. Therefore, although the legal separation is justified, Miss Betsy is also risking her identity as a readable virtuous subject" (165). We might read this as

Haywood's capitulation to public opinion. Alternatively, we could say that Haywood makes it possible for readers to approve the moral character of a woman who left her husband.

Female Development and Happy Endings

If this is a novel of female development, we must ask what Betsy learns. Betsy's reform is the culmination of a long and slow process. Although Betsy realizes as early as page 43 that she had given a man the wrong impression by her "too free behavior," it is a lesson that takes another five hundred pages to master. Beth Fowkes Tobin sees the neurotic repetition of Betsy's mistakes as a manifestation of Haywood's resistance to social codes:

> Because [Betsy's] thoughtlessness embodies her refusal to recognize society's rules which are designed ultimately for the benefit of middling and upper-class men, her persistent refusal to know contains subversive possibilities. Her thoughtlessness exposes the social institutions and economic conditions that shape women's lives as repressive and hostile to expressions of female power. (xiv)

With a heroine who repeatedly resists acquiescing to the status quo, Haywood is able to emphasize the difficulty women had conforming to the rigid standards imposed on them.

Betsy's resistance to "knowing" does not completely prevent her development, however. She does show incremental change. First, she learns not to trust Flora (200). Then, following a letter from Lady Trusty, she learns to take Trueworth more seriously (214). She seeks out her virtuous friend Mabel as an alternative to the treacherous Flora (215). Apprehending, at last, that Miss Forward is a prostitute, she breaks with her (243-44). She spends some time in serious reflection after a play, meditating on the error of trifling with a man of substance (287). Mr. Goodman's death prompts grief and serious reflection (332-33). Convinced that Fineer is not courting her honorably, she puts an end

to it (409). Her discretion grows, but until her husband's patron attacks her, Betsy seems to make the same mistakes over and over again.

The nobleman's attack proves to be the pivotal moment in Betsy's development because she is forced to the knowledge she had previously resisted. For the first time, she fully understands that she is a wife, constrained by the law, and that she has no power of her own: "'Good God!' cried she, 'what infatuation possess'd me! — Am I not married? — Is not all I am the property of Mr. Munden? — Is it not highly criminal in any one to offer to invade his right?'"(557). Her sudden realization of who she is—marital property—leads to an almost Austenian personal insight:

> In fine, she now saw herself, and the errors of her past conduct, in their true light:—"How strange a creature have I been!" cried she, "how inconsistent with myself! I knew the character of a coquet both silly and insignificant, yet did everything in my power to acquire it:—I aimed to inspire awe and reverence in men, yet by my imprudence emboldened them to the most unbecoming freedoms with me:—I had sense enough to discern real merit in those who professed themselves my lovers, yet affected to treat ill those in whom I found the greatest share of it.—Nature has made me no fool, yet not one action of my life has given me any proof of common reason." (558)

This moment marks the reconciliation of Betsy's inner virtue with her outward behavior. Now she will purposely act like a proper lady. She "set herself seriously about improving those perfections of mind which she was sensible could alone entitle her to the esteem of the virtuous and the wise" (561). Betsy's moment of self-realization marks the turning point in her development. She now "checked" herself whenever she feels delight in flattery (558). She actively schools herself to acquire the seriousness of mind that true virtue requires. Not only does Betsy's new reserve and seriousness of mind comport with Haywood's own advice in her periodical, *The Female Spectator*, it also signals the socialization of the heroine to accept normative rules of behavior. It is doubly significant

that Betsy does not learn this lesson from her conduct book advisor Lady Trusty or from her future husband Trueworth. Jane Spencer notes, “The heroine reforms herself, when she realizes her flirtatious conduct has gone too far—not for her ‘virtue’ narrowly defined or for her reputation, but for her self-respect” (151). And most importantly, it is the realization of her position in society—her status as property with limited legal rights—that forces Betsy to see herself, for the first time, as she really is. Rather than reading this as Haywood’s acknowledgement that society’s valuation of Betsy is correct, I believe Haywood is communicating that only by understanding social realities and knowing her own interest can a woman achieve any agency or personal power.

Second Chances

Again protecting Betsy from readers’ moral censure, Haywood asserts that Betsy is not too eager to be reunited with Trueworth. Instead, Betsy chooses to mourn her husband for an entire year and in a stricter fashion than required. When this year comes to an end, Lady Trusty recommends to her several eligible men in the neighborhood. But Betsy answers that she will only think of marriage when it suits her:

> “it is not the place of nativity, nor the birth, nor the estate,—but the person, and the temper of the man, can make me truly happy;—I shall pay a just regard to the advice of my friends, and particularly to your ladyship; but as I have been once a sacrifice to their persuasions, I hope you will have the goodness to forgive me, when I say, that if ever I become a wife again, love, an infinity of love, shall be the chief inducement.” (630)

This speech is important because Betsy asserts her independence and insists on her right to decide about her future. Previously, her “complaisance” had led her into error. It is the reason she goes to the theater with Miss Forward and stays to have dinner with the rakes afterwards; it is the reason she submits to her brothers when they demand her marriage to

Munden. Women were taught to please, and cheerful obedience was a female virtue. It is this lesson that Betsy must unlearn. She must now assert her own will and make her own choices. Or, as Juliette Merritt explains, "Betsy Thoughtless recounts the education of a coquette almost solely in terms of her ability to make the transition from female object—a spectacle of desirable femininity—to a subject in and of knowledge" ("Reforming the Coquet" 188).

Betsy's insistence on love is fulfilled when Trueworth appears to propose again. They are reunited with a mutual physical embrace, in which "he sprang into her arms, which of themselves opened to receive him" (630). Although he had married another woman, Trueworth "had loved her from the first moment he beheld her, and had continued to love her for a long series of time with an excess of passion" (618). Their marriage is significantly different in this respect from either of their first marriages, and perhaps, given a wife's loss of rights, passionate love is the only thing that can make a marriage tolerable. In any case, it is just what the "virtue rewarded" pattern demands: "Thus were the virtues of our heroine (those follies that had defaced them being fully corrected) at length rewarded with a happiness, retarded only till she had render'd herself wholly worthy of receiving it" (634). It is a Richardsonian reward, with a difference.

Kathryn King points out that *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* is a "novel of second chances" ("The Afterlife" 214). Given the inflexibility of her society's conception of female virtue and its denial of second chances where chastity is concerned, Haywood makes a bold statement. Flint notes the radical implications of Betsy's reward: "There are few, if any, examples before Wollstonecraft's heroines of a female character who actively separates from her husband and is both exonerated and wedded successfully to another

man" (241). And David Oakleaf reflects, "That the novel concludes with a second marriage for Betsy, and on her terms, is momentous. Haywood rewards with a happy marriage, on terms she sets, a woman previously possessed by another man" (125). Betsy's second life suggests that women can transcend the limited categories of female virtue available in Haywood's society. As author, Haywood creates a consensus among readers that a woman like Betsy can be a model to emulate.

Haywood's Legacy

The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless was popular and widely read, appearing in nine editions and remaining in print for 33 years. It was translated into four European languages and was widely read on the continent; it was adapted as a play that was adapted again in turn. Although Richardson's circle apparently did not care for it, and Henry Fielding famously put Betsy on trial for dullness, notable readers like Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Clara Reeve, and Tobias Smollett admired it (Spedding, *Bibliography* 532). Given the novel's importance at the time, we must begin to understand how it may have influenced the subsequent development of the novel in the eighteenth century—and how it may have shaped proto-feminist thought.

It is surprising that scholars have not compared *Betsy Thoughtless* with Mary Wollstonecraft's *The Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria* (1798); the connection between these two novels is undeniable. Maria's husband, the venal Venables certainly resembles Betsy's mundane Munden. Both men are unfaithful, cheat their wives financially, and venture upon wife pandering. Both heroines attempt to separate legally from the their husbands. In addition, Maria's false imprisonment in a lunatic asylum by her husband resembles that of Annilia in Haywood's *Distress'd Orphan*, who, like Maria, finds "Love

in a Madhouse." Of the various endings Wollstonecraft considered, one is the formation of a friendship between Maria and the prostitute Jemima that makes them partners in mothering Maria's child, a situation that resembles the ending of *The Rash Resolve*.[16] As Haywood did in *Betsy Thoughtless*, Wollstoncraft recognized women's common plight in shared oppression. In her preface, Wollstoncraft writes that her purpose is "exhibiting the misery and oppression, peculiar to women, that arise out of the partial laws and customs of society" (73). Wollstonecraft is now recognized as the first modern voice of English feminism. We should study further how Eliza Haywood may have helped further the emergence of that cause.

[16] I wonder if the character Eliza in Wollstonecraft's *Mary; A Fiction* (1788) is modeled after Eliza Haywood. She is the object of Wollstonecraft's contempt who spends her time reading "those most delightful substitutes for bodily dissipation, novels" (2). Perhaps Wollstonecraft's opinion of Haywood changed after reading *Betsy Thoughtless*.

CONCLUSION

Paula Backscheider has written that "like runs of musical scales, texts throughout the [eighteenth] century include women characters in each life stage and various social degrees and repeat that the *condition* of women prevents fulfillment, security, and happiness" ("Rise of Gender" 48). Eliza Haywood seems to have been especially sensitive to this negative condition and she used her fiction to explain it. Ironically, even today Haywood is mostly known as an erotic writer. Her first novel, *Love in Excess*, is frequently the only book that modern audiences read, but this book, with its portrait of male reformation and its happy double marriage ending, is quite unusual in Haywood's canon. Far more conspicuous are numerous tales of women who are betrayed, by the men in their family, or by society at large. I hope this study will help make readers aware of another Haywood—Haywood the serious moralist and the proto-feminist.

It is my contention that Haywood's subject—gender ideology—is, along with questions of "truth" and "virtue," a cultural problem that provokes the writing of novels. Using Michael McKeon's theory of the novel as a form that mediates conflicting cultural ideologies, I have investigated how Haywood used that form to confront competing theories of gender in the first half of the eighteenth century. I have shown that her novels engage in a deconstruction of the patriarchal ideas that disempowered women.

It may seem that I have rejected Ian Watt's definition of the novel. Rather, I view his definition of the novel in the 1740s as a good definition of the novel in the 1740s. Instead of viewing these texts as the first "real" novels, I have used Franco Moretti's suggestion that what we call the novel is in fact "a whole family of novelistic forms" (91).

This orientation makes it possible to expand our consideration of the novel to include those written during the frenzy of novel production in the 1720s. In turn, we are better able to make connections between texts in different parts of the eighteenth century.

Since this is the first study to consider multiple novels by Haywood, it is now possible to tell a story about her development as a politically minded writer. Chapter One demonstrates that, early in her career, Haywood's proto-feminist sympathies were drawn to the figure of the fallen woman. Haywood clearly sought to ameliorate the condition of these women by using fiction to create sympathy for those women society shunned—society's throwaways. Chapter Two shows that when Haywood entered the fray of direct political writing, she became a perceptive social critic. Whereas her early novels are the stories of individuals, with *Memoirs of a Certain Island* she demonstrates an awareness of institutional corruption. She shows that self-interest is the root cause of her society's many vices. In writing amatory fictions about politics, Haywood saw that women were especially vulnerable in the new political order. The connections she makes in *Memoirs of a Certain Island* between the personal and the political become stronger in the second half of the 1720s. Chapter Three examines four novels that make exceptional claims about how men use the law to destroy women. Haywood insinuates that women are particularly exposed in legal affairs both because the law affords them few rights and because they do not have the knowledge or education to protect themselves. Chapter Four proves that in the last years of her career, in the novel *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, Haywood has achieved a broader feminist consciousness; she asserts that women share political interests because of their gender. In addition, she manages to deconstruct many platitudes of bourgeois ideology in a fiction that denies its own

impropriety. For this reason, I see *Betsy Thoughtless* as her most powerful and most subversive work.

Although Haywood's early work is often seen as fundamentally different from that of her later years, I have shown how they are connected along a trajectory of intellectual development that culminates in a modern feminist awareness. While this study accomplishes some of the work of connecting the early and later works of Eliza Haywood, much more needs to be done in order to understand Haywood's importance to English literature. Specifically, we are only beginning to understand how Haywood influenced her contemporaries or the writers who followed her. Fanny Burney's debt to Haywood in *Evelina* is undisputed (Erickson). But Haywood's influence may not always be so direct. In the 1720s, women writers responded to each other's work in specific ways that defined different proto-feminist positions (Prescott). Did this early tradition persist into the next wave of female-authored novels in the 1780s? It is a fascinating question. Mary Wollstonecraft, at least, seems to have recognized that Haywood shared her concerns. Eliza Haywood may not have remained as popular as she had been, but she certainly was not forgotten by later generations.

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